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An Eastern Miscellany

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BY

THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY, M.P.

AUTHOR OF 'ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF EMPIRE IN ASIA,'
'SPORT AND POLITICS UNDER AN EASTERN SKY,'
'A WANDERING STUDENT IN THE FAR EAST'

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INTRODUCTION.

THE greater number of the chapters which follow have already seen the light of day. Written at different times, they possess no conscious connection beyond a common setting—that of the East. Such kinship only may they claim as may be properly attributed to the possession of a common source of inspiration—Asia. It may be, therefore, that some interest will be found to be attached to the fact that, regarded as a whole, the collection has unconsciously developed a moral.

The political theme running through the earlier chapters is the rivalry of European Powers. They were written at a time when interest still centred in the plots and counter-plots, the intentions and ambitions, the hopes and fears of the pro-consuls of Western nations deeply absorbed in different phases of empire building on eastern soil—in the planning of extensions

or in the strengthening of edifices already raised up. How to infuse new strength into a chain of moribund buffer states was the question of moment for Great Britain: how to sap the vitality of the same states the problem which possessed a never-ending fascination for the pioneers, who worked and intrigued on the outermost fringe of the Russian advance across the steppes of Central Asia. Had not Russia's strength been dissipated and her purpose weakened by the immense length of her line of advance, the buffer states might well have collapsed and a different turn been given to history. But Russia had always pushed East as well as South, and Fate decreed that it should be on the shores of the Pacific and not of the Indian Ocean that the course of her hitherto unarrested advance should be stayed.

Nor were Great Britain and Russia the only Western Powers manœuvring upon the Eastern stage. In the south-east corner of the continent a great pro-consul of France—M. Paul Doumer—was finding a congenial field for the play of his activity, while Germany and other Powers nibbled fitfully at the coast-line of China. So largely did the rivalries of European Powers bulk in the picture at the close of the nineteenth century, that the Eastern peoples themselves fell into the background and attracted a very small share

of attention to their own doings. In 1900 China stirred uneasily; but it was not until the eyes of Europe were opened by the collision between Russia and Japan that it became generally recognised that an Eastern revival was at hand, and that the Powers of Europe were about to be called upon to look at the Eastern question from a wholly different point of view.

European rivalries became of necessity subordinated to more pressing problems arising out of the new attitude of the East towards the West. As a result of *pourparlers* between Great Britain and Russia, an agreement with regard to their respective interests in Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet was arrived at in 1907; and from the safeguarding of India from aggression from without the question of interest for Englishmen became the readjustment of relations with the 300 million subject people within.

Thus it comes about that the later chapters display Asia in a different light. They deal with the military achievements and the commercial and industrial prospects of an Eastern Power—Japan; and they discuss some of the problems which arise out of the growing ambitions which have been awakened in India.

The moral then is obvious. The nations of Europe can no longer afford to regard Asia as a convenient arena in which to tilt at one another.

What the East can do in modern war has already been amply demonstrated: what she may do in other directions is already being dimly outlined. The Chinese steel-works at Hankow—which were in process of construction when I visited that town in 1907—are already exporting pig-iron to America.[1] The magnitude of the undeveloped mineral resources of China can only be adequately grasped by the expert geologist: the immense latent power stored away in her population of 400 millions, by those who possess personal knowledge of the thrift, industry, business aptitude, and adaptability of the Chinese character. The thought of the results of the application of the prodigious force represented by the latter when scientifically organised to the exploitation of the former, may well stagger the imagination. The excise duty imposed upon the Indian Cotton Industry bears eloquent testimony to the terror inspired by Eastern industrial competition in the breasts of those who have even faintly experienced it; yet no one who is acquainted with the political situation in India will deny that the task upon which British statesmanship is even now begin-

[1] The company have recently concluded a contract with an American corporation to supply them for fifteen years with not less than 36,000 tons and not more than 100,000 tons of pig-iron at gold $18 per ton, inclusive of freight and the American import duty.

ning to concentrate, is that of directing the growing force generated by the spread of Western education from political into industrial channels. The Indian and Chinese empires between them account for little short of half the population of the world. What is going to be the effect of the coming industrial organisation of the East upon the wages and standard of living of the working classes of the West? A large question, indeed, and one opening up an ever-expanding vista of controversy and speculation upon which it would be impossible to embark here, yet one which must occupy the attention of economists and statesmen in a steadily increasing degree.

It must not be supposed, because in this preface I have laid stress upon the political aspect of the pages which follow, that they are exclusively of a political character. On the contrary, with the hope of attracting the attention of the general reader to the varied interests of his country in the Eastern hemisphere, I have included in this collection chapters wholly destitute of any moral either political or commercial. If this bait should prove successful in exciting the interest of any casual reader in the more important matters touched upon in other parts of the volume, I shall feel duly gratified.

In conclusion, I desire to express my thanks to all those to whom I am indebted for permission to make use of material which has already been published. Chapter III. is included by kind permission of the Northern Newspaper Syndicate. Chapter XI. is an enlarged and revised edition of a paper written for, and published in, the 'Saturday Review Political Handbook.' Other chapters are included by kind permission of the editors of 'Blackwood's Magazine,' the 'National Review,' and 'Travel and Exploration.'

RONALDSHAY.

House of Commons,
March 1911.

The strong hot breath of the land is lashing
The wild sea-horses, they rear and race;
The plunging bows of our ship are dashing
Full in the fiery south wind's face.

And onward still to the broadening ocean
Out of the narrow and perilous seas,
Till we rock with a large and listless motion
In the moist soft air of the Indian breeze.

And the Southern Cross, like a standard flying,
Hangs in front of the tropic night,
But the Great Bear sinks, like a hero dying,
And the Pole-star lowers its signal light;

And the round earth rushes toward the morning,
And the waves grow paler and wan the foam,
Misty and dim, with a glance of warning,
Vanish the stars of my northern home.

—*From "A Night in the Red Sea," by* Sir Alfred Lyall.

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PART I.

GENERAL

AN EASTERN MISCELLANY.

CHAPTER I.

THE CALL OF THE EAST.

(*A Speech delivered at a Banquet at the Authors' Club in October* 1909.)

It is a great honour that you have done me in inviting me to be your guest at this the opening banquet of your session, and believe me I am keenly appreciative of your kindness. At the same time I am fully conscious of the responsibility which you have placed upon me in asking me to open a discussion in the presence of so distinguished a company of writers. I do so with all deference, and not without some secret misgivings as to the wisdom of the choice of topic, which in your courtesy you have permitted me to make. It is not every one who has known the "Call of the East," and to endeavour to conjure up for these even some faint semblance of the illusive witchery of Eastern scenes must prove

a task beyond the power of my poor prose. On the other hand, there are many for whom the "Call of the East" has long since lost its appeal, —for whom, indeed, under stress of long and enforced familiarity with the prosaic actualities of daily life in Eastern lands, it has assumed a note of hollow—even sardonic—mockery. I am not unmindful, you see, of the scornful derision to which the penetrating pen of Kipling was able to subject that unfortunate gentleman, Pagett, M.P. "Pagett, M.P.," as you will perhaps recall, "was a liar, and a fluent liar therewith, who spoke of the heat of India as the Asian solar myth: went on a four months' visit to study the East in November," and was persuaded, apparently by an apocryphal Indian civil servant, to lengthen his stay till September. I find little to encourage me in my task to-night in the lines with which Pagett's apocryphal host apostrophised him on his departure—

"And I laughed as I drove from the station, but the mirth
died out of my lips
As I thought of the fools like Pagett who write of their
Eastern trips,
And the sneers of the travelled idiots who duly misgovern
the land,
And I prayed to the Lord to deliver another one into my
hand."

Yet another poet has described in trite verse the unpleasant passage from illusion to reality

which has too often to be trodden by those who have responded to the "Call of the East," and have thenceforth found themselves prisoners in her inexorable grip. First we have the spell of the Siren—

"From the East came the breath of its odours,
And its heat melted soft in the haze
While we dimly descried thy Pagodas,
O Cybele, ancient of days;
Heard the hum of thy mystic processions,
The echo of myriads who cry,
And the wail of their vain intercessions
Through the bare empty vault of the sky."

Then come the uneasy questionings which provide the prelude to complete disillusionment—

"Has he learnt how thy honours are rated,
Has he cast his accounts in thy school,
With the sweets of authority sated
Would he give up his throne to be cool?
Doth he curse Oriental romancing
And wish he had toiled all his day
At the Bar, or the Banks, or Financing,
And got damned in a commonplace way?"

Finally we have reality—

"Thou hast racked him with duns and diseases
And he lies as thy scorching winds blow
Recollecting old England's sea breezes
On his back in a lone bungalow;
At the slow coming darkness repining,
How he girds at the sun till it sets,
As he marks the long shadows declining
O'er the Land of Regrets."[1]

[1] 'Verses written in India,' Sir Alfred Lyall.

I do not know whether there be any such present here to-night: if there be they will perhaps smile pityingly—but I hope indulgently—at the enthusiastic idealism of one who has been permitted by circumstance to taste the delights of Eastern travel, without having to swallow the bitter dregs which too often lurk at the bottom of the draught of those who drink not at their own discretion, but at the imperious bidding of a remorseless Fate.

Yet even to such I would suggest that for many the "Call of the East" has existed, exists, persists, not always seductive perhaps, but always insistent; and a moment's reflection will surely show that this same "Call of the East" has been one of the governing factors in the making of modern history. From the day when the daring and enterprise of the great Sea Captains of Portugal solved the riddle of the Southern seas, an unbroken and ever-swelling volume of explorers, soldiers, and traders has poured from Europe into Asia, attracted irresistibly to her vast and mysterious shores. Nor has her attraction been felt solely in individual breasts: states and kingdoms have been drawn, willingly or unwillingly, in the wake of individual pioneers. Nations have risen and fallen on the tide of the Asian sea. Portugal, Spain, Holland, France, and Great Britain have each been borne in rapid suc-

cession to the loftiest pinnacles of their greatness upon the crest of an eastern wave.

The day of conquest has sped by, the Curtain of Mystery, behind which the now familiar outline of Asia loomed darkly to the pioneers of four centuries ago, has been rolled aside; Asia stands to-day a world revealed; yet the spell which she laid upon the traders and adventurers of four centuries ago she casts over an infinitely wider community at the present time. There is, no doubt, still work for the soldier and the explorer; the merchant may still find ample occupation in spreading over the entire continent the warp and woof of a vast commercial web; but with the gradual filling in of the mosaic of European ascendancy, the monopoly of trader and soldier has gradually passed away, and the early bands of fighting and trading pioneers have been swelled by a vast army of travellers and students who have been attracted in ever increasing numbers to the limitless and fascinating fields of Eastern study and research.

This shifting of the seat of gravity from West to East, if remarkable, is, nevertheless, neither inexplicable nor unnatural, for the very vastness and variety of the countries and peoples of the East have endowed the Continent of Asia with a manifold and inexhaustible charm. Philosopher and Historian, Littérateur and Artist, Archæ-

ologist and Traveller, Politician and Diplomatist, will one and all find ample scope within her boundaries for the exercise of their activities and the practice of their powers.

In the world of thought and metaphysics the purest and most elevating aspirations of which humanity has so far proved capable have been born and fostered in the minds of the men of the devout and contemplative East. The admission of the essayist, Emerson, that "Europe has always owed to Oriental genius its divine impulses," is a mere generalisation of the great and indisputable truth that the three great religions which sway the world — Christianity, Mohammedanism, Buddhism — have without exception been born upon Asian soil.

Her contributions to literature and art provide worthy monuments to the varied genius of her peoples; the absorbing chronicles of her empires and her kings constitute some of the most enchanting pages in world history; the names of her conquerors stand emblazoned among the rulers of the world. Who, among those to whom world history is an open book, do not linger in wonder or in admiration at the achievements of a Cyrus, a Darius, or a Xerxes, of Zengis Khan the Mongol, of Tamerlane the Tartar King, of Mahmud of Gazni, of Báber, of Akbar, and indeed of many more? Again

in the world of Eastern literature the man of letters will find food of many flavours. He may ponder on the wisdom of Confucius, the Chinese sage, he may revel in the outpourings of the Persian poets, of Firdusi or of Sádi, or again in the Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyám; and if perchance he has himself been fortunate enough to experience the unique sensations produced by toiling from dawn to sunset over the sand-strewn waste of an Eastern desert, he will appreciate as never before the incomparable word-painting of the Old Testament writers. Was it not Isaiah who wrote of "rivers of water in a dry place, the shadow of a great rock in a weary land"? and Jeremiah who tells of "a land of deserts and of pits, a land of droughts and of the shadow of death, a land that no man passed through and where no man dwelt"? If we turn to the domain of art, we find in Asia's array of pavilions, tombs, and temples faithful expression of the artistic spirit of his offspring. What could be more brilliant than the Shwey Dagone of Burma or the Temple of Heaven at Peking; what more ingenious in conception than the Japanese temples at Nikko or Tokio; what more delicate in workmanship and design than the beautiful Jain temples at the summit of Mount Abu; what more lovely than the Taj Mahal at Agra; what more superb than the

great bronze image, the Great Buddha at Kamakura; what more amazing than the stupendous structures which still survive and are the glory of Samarkand?

In the fascinating field of archæology, the sand-strewn wastes of Assyria and Chaldæa, the stately ruins of Susa and Persepolis, the jungle-covered cities of Anaradjapura and Polanaruwa have yielded a rich store from the treasure-house of the past, while there still exist wide fields for exploration and research in the buried depths of the forbidding deserts of Taklamakan or in the unsolved riddle of the massive masonry of Angkor Thomé. For myself, I confess that when standing amid the *débris* which marks the sites of Nineveh and ancient Babylon I have been assailed with an overwhelming desire "to wind the mighty secrets of the past and turn the key of time." Indeed, as I have wandered among these haunts of bygone empires and trodden the Courts of Esarhaddon and Nebuchadnezzar, I have seemed to hear in imagination the hum of mighty workings come echoing from a remote antiquity down the dim corridors of time. Amid such surroundings, too, the remorseless march of Time the Destroyer is thrust naked into view. "Time," in the words of Sir Thomas Browne, "sadly overcometh all things . . . while his sister Oblivion reclineth semi-somnous on a Pyramid, gloriously triumph-

ing, making puzzles of Titanian erections, and turning old glories into dreams. History sinketh beneath her cloud. The traveller as he paceth through those deserts asketh of her who builded them? And she mumbleth something, but what it is he heareth not."

And as to the Wanderer—the man stricken with that strange complaint which the Germans call *der Wanderlust*—what is the prospect which Asia holds out to him? To such an one the varied scenery which she boasts is the source of an infinite and abiding charm. No contrast is too great for her, no antithesis too profound. Sights, scenery, sounds, peoples, religions, customs, and climates, characteristic of every division upon the physical, ethnical, religious, or climatic scale between the equator and the pole, are included in the bounteous catalogue of her wonderful and diversified store, and each according to its kind is possessed of a supreme and inexplicable power to attract. If the voluptuous luxuriance of her tropical vegetation is full of a seductive appeal, the vast voids of her limitless and sun-scorched wastes exercise upon the mind of man an imperious and irresistible command. It is here, in the infinite depths of the wilderness, that the mind bends before the incomparable magnificence of desolation and shrinks abashed before the overwhelming grandeur of emptiness, of immense

silence, of illimitable space. Throughout the Continent, from Scutari to Tokio, and from Colombo to the Arctic seas, nature delights to display the peculiarities and characteristics of her manifold attributes to a superlative and unexampled degree. The most stupendous mountain ranges gird illimitable plains, a profuse abundance stalks hand in hand with penury and want, immense wealth rubs shoulders with the extremes of poverty and indigence. The scourge of an Indian summer is only equalled in severity by the rigour of a Siberian winter; the awful aridity of Persia and Arabia by the luxuriant verdure of Indo-China, Burma, or Ceylon. The colossal highland plateau of Thibet, with an average altitude of 16,000 feet, presents a geographical freak entirely in keeping with the varied phenomena of Asia. The apotheosis of desolation itself, it pours forth a wealth of life-giving waters, which find an outlet in the ocean at points so far apart as the ice-fringed shores of the Yellow Sea and the torrid waters of the Indian Ocean. Of the four great rivers which here find their source—the Salwin, the Mekong, the Hwang-ho, and the Yang-tsze—I have, in the course of a single journey, crossed the first three and travelled for 1500 miles on the bosom of the fourth, passing with characteristic suddenness from the broad unruffled waters of the lower

reaches to the swirling races and majestic gorges of the upper Yang-tsze.

Contrast is alike the keynote of her physical and her social phenomena. In Asia may still be seen in startling juxtaposition the two extremes in the scale of social evolution. Side by side with squalor and poverty, with plague, famine, and pestilence, the inevitable progeny of the great teeming cities of India and China, where are massed together in extravagant profusion the multifarious entities of a toiling and struggling humanity, still flourish the luxury and splendour, the pomp and pageantry, the unfettered and illimitable egoism of an irresponsible and unchallenged absolutism. We in Europe have had some examples of autocratic arrogance. It was a European autocrat who boasted, "L'état c'est moi!"—and it was the Tsar Paul of Russia who pompously declared, "There is no man of consequence in this Empire but he with whom I am actually speaking; and so long only as I am speaking to him is he of any consequence." But it was a Burmese potentate who out of sheer caprice butchered eighty of the royal princes on his accession to the throne — a holocaust perpetrated, to make use of his own words, "in accordance with custom." It was a Siamese monarch who, wearied by the importunity of certain worthy missionaries, handed over 3000 slaves to

be taught religion, with the gracious permission that "they might make Christians of these people"; and it is only in China that the occupant of the throne may write "Tremble and Obey" at the foot of his merest written whim, with the knowledge that to 400,000,000 people the command is an inviolable law.

I have attempted in the course of the observations which I have ventured to address to you to indicate the causes—or some of the causes—which seem to me to lie at the root of what is an acknowledged historic fact—*i.e.*, the persistence with which the peoples of the West have turned their gaze during recent times to the lands of the East. I would now ask, in conclusion, has not the "Call of the East" some special significance for us as members of the British race? I think it has. For us, surely, there can be no more engrossing chapter in history than that which unfolds before the reader the dazzling panorama of events, by which the irresistible force of a stern and virile character involuntarily, but inevitably, raised up the magnificent fabric of Western sovereignty upon the dying embers of the gorgeous empires of the East. "The English did not calculate the conquest of the Indies," writes Emerson; "it fell to their character." No desire for conquest governed the policy of Great Britain in her dealings with the Eastern world; rather were her statesmen

actuated by an extreme distaste for acquiring further territories with their accompanying burden of fresh ties and new responsibilities. The interest of England in India began in trade and ended, in spite of herself, in empire. Never has so gorgeous a possession been forced upon so unwilling a recipient. The vast ambitions and soaring schemes of other Powers crumbled to dust half realised before "the prolific energy and powers of a free and united people unscourged by invasion; made self-reliant and resourceful because accustomed to think and to act for themselves."[1] For a century Portugal held undisputed sway over the rich commerce of the East, by right of might which her supremacy at sea had given her. With the wane of Portuguese and Spanish power, arose in quick succession the twin stars of France and Holland, and for a brief and breathless moment the whole continent of India vibrated beneath the touch of the dramatic figure of Dupleix. But the sea power of each in turn was harried and broken by the hardy mariners of England, while in India itself, the little band of self-reliant and determined traders held grimly and doggedly to their own, producing the men when the moment came—Clive, Hastings, Napier,—who went their own way, and, under a storm of protest from the Government at home, laid firm the foundations

[1] Great Britain in India.

of future empire. Nothing could stay the extension of the Company's territories, and at last, when the whirlwind of the great mutiny had swept over India and spent itself, the magnificent conception of Indian Empire, with its immense responsibilities and its tremendous power for shaping the destinies of Asia, dawned faintly on the minds of England's statesmen, and the possessions of the "Honorable East India Company" became thenceforward the most splendid appanage of the Imperial Crown. A new era had dawned; the spirit of empire in its purest and highest form lit the imagination and governed the actions of the long line of Indian Viceroys and officials, whose reward for years of devoted service and strenuous endeavour is to be found in the knowledge that there is graven in living letters across the field of their labours this pregnant sentence of Carlyle: "A Pagan Empire of Force displaced by a nobler supremacy"—that of justice, order, and peace.

For the history of India tells how kingdom warred ceaselessly with kingdom, and how century after century left her an easy prey to invasion and conquest from without, because torn by dissension within; it tells, too, how the advent of a strong ruling power from the West was alone able to give her the blessings of order and peace, by governing with a firm hand and a detached impartiality the many races congregated upon her soil. The

strong arm of Great Britain picked up the scattered threads of the Indian fabric, and if the fires of war licked fiercely from time to time along the wild and passionate Indian border-lands, peace was maintained within. "For a longer period than was ever known in your land before," runs a significant sentence in the famous Proclamation of King Edward, of November 2, 1908, "you have escaped the dire calamities of war within your borders. Internal peace has been unbroken."

Such has been the achievement of Great Britain in her dealings with India. The student of Indian affairs, however, will not have failed to observe that her very success has resulted in bringing to life new problems well calculated to tax to the utmost during the coming years the resources of British statesmanship. Great Britain has given to the peoples of India peace; peace has given leisure for thought—not always profitable thought: moreover, heedless of consequences, she has set herself the task of endeavouring to clothe Eastern minds with Western ideas. Education, it was finally decided, was to be of an exclusively European type, the literature of India was to give place to the English classics. The Indian student of to-day soaks a mind ill adapted to such treatment with the philosophy of Herbert Spencer and the ideals of John Stuart Mill. Discontent with the existing order of things has been the outstanding result.

Moreover, external influences have been at work which have added fuel to an already glowing fire. The dawn of the twentieth century witnessed the rapid growth of new forces throughout the East—forces generated by the clash of the cold, logical, calculating brain of the West with the introspective and contemplative mind of the East. The rising storm broke over the plains of Manchuria, and with the triumph of the Eastern Power the whole Continent of Asia writhed under the supremacy of Europe. It was not to be expected that India would escape the quickening of the pulse which set in throughout the Continent; nor were expectations disappointed. As is invariably the case under such circumstances, growing ambition and quickening aspiration bred violence. The Indian National Congress became permeated with extremists, while sedition was widely preached by the native press, and anarchy broke out like a poisonous fester in many parts of the country. We find ourselves, then, at the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Great Britain in India, and what the end of that chapter may be no man can foretell. This only is certain, that the problem with which great Britain is now confronted—the problem, that is to say, of the future relations between the rulers and the ruled—is one which must call for the exercise of all those attributes of British character which have

made our country great, and one, moreover, which, raising as it does in its widest application the whole question of the future relations between East and West, must in its solution profoundly affect the course of history during the century that lies before us.

CHAPTER II.

MODES OF ASIATIC TRAVEL.

MANY years ago, before the stage-coach had given place to the steam-engine, or the post-chaise to the motor-car, the adventurous spirits of Europe, who were enticed from their ease by alluring tales of the kingdoms and the marvels of the East, were struck by the contrast between the modes of travel which they found themselves obliged to adopt and those to which they were accustomed in their own country. "A man cannot travel in Asia as they do in Europe," wrote Tavernier, a notable traveller of the seventeenth century; "nor at the same hours, nor with the same ease. The best inns," he went on to say, "are the tents which you carry along with you, and your hosts are your servants which get ready those victuals which you have bought in good towns."

It is true that great changes have taken place since Tavernier gave to the world a record of his wanderings. Asia, as well as Europe, has

benefited by the inventions of Stephenson and Watt. In many parts of Asia the railway is to-day as familiar an object in the landscape as it is in Europe. India, thanks to the enterprise of her English rulers, has over thirty thousand miles of iron way; Japan can boast of a total of more than five thousand miles, and China of two thousand miles—a figure which is being rapidly increased; while from the eastern flank of Europe two great iron arms have been thrust out into the vast rolling expanses of Northern and Central Asia: the one, the great Siberian Railway, a long narrow ribbon of steel trailing across six thousand miles of Asiatic soil; the other, the Trans-Caspian line, a rod of iron forging its way up to the very gates of Bokhara and Samarkand, to lose itself finally in the unmeasured wastes of Turkestan.

Yet the chief charm of Eastern travel lies not in its immense railways, touched with romance though some of these may be, but in the very contrast which it still provides, for those who seek it, to the rigid uniformity and mechanical precision of life and locomotion at home. "A country that possesses no railway is," as Lord Curzon has remarked, "*ipso facto*, the possessor of a great charm," and there are in Asia immense tracts whose pristine quietude is still unbroken by the raucous screech of the railway engine.

It is with these regions that I am now concerned — Mesopotamia and Chaldea, Persia and Baluchistán, the huge block of the Himalayas which lies between Chilas and Tibet, Turkestan and Southern Siberia, and the lovely highlands of South-west China—of all of which I can speak with that appreciation which personal experience alone can give. And it is as a traveller in the narrowest sense of the word, who is prepared to take as his text and to amplify the sage dictum of Tavernier, "A man cannot travel in Asia as they do in Europe," that I now propose to write.

Among the peoples in whose philosophy the railway engineer is still a thing undreamed of, one's mode of travel is mainly determined by the physical character of the country. The vast level lands of Asia, which alternately awe and fascinate the traveller by reason of the very immensity of their space, lend themselves to a variety of transport. The pack-pony, mule, donkey, and camel are all familiar figures in my memory of many months of daily marching,—the latter on the shimmering plains of Baluchistan and the sun-scorched plateau of Eastern Persia, the former in Mesopotamia, Western Persia, and many mountainous lands as well. In yet other lowlands the science of travel has reached a further stage of evolution—namely, the wheeled

stage. Wheeled transport is represented by the "araba" of Turkey, the "tarantass" of Russia, the "tonga" of Northern India, and the cart and wheel-barrow of China.

In really mountainous regions, human transport is the almost universal agency of progress. Where ice and snow, or mountain peak and precipice, defy the lower animals, man himself steps in. In certain mountainous regions, it is true, animals are met with which compete successfully with man, such as the domesticated yak of Tibet, which flourishes at giddy altitudes and travels safely over the rugged and inhospitable highlands of that strange and dreary country; and I have occasionally come across a sturdy breed of sheep employed by nomad folk to carry their bags of grain. These, however, provide the exceptions to the rule, and in such regions human transport may be said to be the basis of man's mobility. There remains one other kind of country to be mentioned—namely, that which is freely and conveniently intersected by lakes and rivers. Some parts of India come under this category, such as Lower Bengal, where a well-to-do man will often be found keeping his boat as elsewhere he would keep his cart; but China is the land, *par excellence*, of water transport, its immense rivers providing live arteries of communication between its innermost provinces and the sea.

Let me deal with these manifold means of locomotion in turn, prefacing my remarks with a necessary caution as to the meaning of the word *road* as used throughout this chapter. The reader must divest his mind of all preconceived ideas as to the meaning of the word. Perhaps the nearest approach to a general definition of an Asiatic road will be found in a modification of Euclid's definition of a straight line—"That which lies *un*evenly between its extreme points." For want of any other term one is unfortunately compelled to apply the word to any line of country over which one travels in passing from one point to another. Under these circumstances, the road may or may not be distinguishable from the surrounding country, and all that can be postulated for it with any certainty is that it will not have a macadamised surface. When the road is distinguishable from the surrounding country, it has usually become so by reason of its being, by tradition, the shortest distance between two particular points—between two villages, for instance. These remarks do not, of course, apply to foreign-made roads such as the post-roads of Northern India, but only to the indigenous article.

First, then, a few words on the subject of wheeled transport. The araba, already mentioned, is a more or less ordinary cart with hooped covering, resembling a light covered dray, and calls for

no particular description. It provides a useful, if somewhat tedious, means of locomotion in Asia Minor. The tonga, a low, springless, two-wheeled cart, of Indian design, has been adapted to modern requirements in Northern India. It is in use on the post-roads, and conveys mails and passengers — to take a single example of its usefulness — from India to Kashmir. Relays of ponies are found at intervals of four or five miles, and so effectively does this system work that one experiences no difficulty in covering as much as a hundred miles between dawn and dark.

The vehicle, however, with which I personally am best acquainted is the Russian tarantass. It, too, is without springs — that, indeed, appears to be an unfailing characteristic of every form of Eastern carriage — and it has the additional peculiarity of having no seats. On one occasion I drove two thousand five hundred miles in a tarantass across the limitless wastes of Central Siberia and Turkestan. The Russian has laid himself out to absorb these countries, and has dotted lines of solitary little post-houses across them at intervals of ten to twenty miles, to mark the lines of his advance. At each of these one pays the post-master for grease for the axles of one's wheels, which otherwise catch fire, and one also pays him for a relay of ponies and a

driver to take one the next stage. Often there are no ponies to be had, and then ensues a weary wait until transport can be obtained once more. So much time did I find wasted waiting at these dreary post-huts that I soon took to making my tarantass my home, driving day and night as long as horses were available; but even so—driving day and night—it took me on one occasion a full thirteen days to cover a distance of little more than eight hundred miles. The horses are harnessed three abreast in the fashion known as the "troïka," and the charge varies from a halfpenny to a penny per horse per mile. The country traversed is for the most part flat and wholly unlovely, and is known as steppe, and the sole physical obstacle to monotonous and uninterrupted progress is to be found in the occasional presence of a river. These are crossed by means of ferries or bridges. Being in Asia, both methods are apt to prove prolific of trouble and delay. I was once kept for a whole day on the bank of a river because the ferry would not work, and on another occasion had to assist in rebuilding a bridge, which had been partially washed away, before it was possible to proceed. My two tarantass had cost me ten pounds to purchase at the beginning of my journey, and I sold them for the price of a night's lodging at a primitive hotel at the end,

a mutually satisfactory transaction by which I was relieved of an incubus and the innkeeper provided with a lavish supply of scrap-iron and firewood.

Two other forms of wheeled conveyance only shall receive mention — namely, the cart and wheel-barrow of China. Each in its way is, I imagine, the apotheosis of discomfort, though, as I have not made personal trial of the latter, I can only predicate this of the former. In shape the body of the Peking cart resembles a lady's travelling trunk with one end knocked out of it. This is hung between two massive iron-studded wheels of wood, which the traveller soon suspects would fail to satisfy Euclid's definition of a circle. A mule is harnessed between the shafts, and when one has crawled into the box through the aperture, the driver places himself upon the only sitting room still available—namely, the near end of the shafts, thereby substituting his own broad back for the missing end of the trunk. Hot, cramped, and in semi-darkness, the view blocked out by the faded blue of the cotton-clad body of the driver, one is now in the most perfect surroundings for appreciating the engineering skill which has been expended upon the average Chinese road.

In those parts of China to which the Peking cart has not yet penetrated, the wheel-barrow

affords an agreeable substitute. In the province of Ssu-ch'uan, I perceived the leisured classes who do not aspire to the dignity of a chair (to be mentioned hereafter) being trundled along in these vehicles, the rate of hire being two *cash* per *li*, roughly two-thirds of a farthing per mile. Even in the coast towns, where many forms of conveyance are available, the wheel-barrow finds favour among the lower classes; and in Shanghai I found factory hands wheeled daily to the scene of their labours on barrows of exaggerated size, six men to a barrow, at a contract price of sixty cents (say 1s. 2½d.) per man per month. This, however, is a form of transport to which the traveller from Europe will seldom, if ever, resort, and I must return to a consideration of the various forms of animal transport which he will ordinarily employ.

The pack-pony or mule is undoubtedly the animal most widely used by the traveller in Asia. In Persia there is a system of post-riding in vogue, relays of riding horses being found at the post-houses in place of the harness horses of the post-roads of other lands. This system is known as "chapar," and great distances can be covered by the hardy traveller, who may continue riding as long as he can induce his aching limbs to cling to the saddle. A single horse is supplied

for his baggage, which has consequently to be cut down to a minimum, and in Persia, as in other countries, the traveller who has leisure will probably buy or hire his own string of pack-ponies and travel at caravan pace.

It cannot be said that the lot of the average pack-pony is a happy one. He is, as a rule, an overworked, under-fed, long-suffering beast, who looks out on the world with a stolid fatalism that is characteristic of most things Eastern. The methods of loading him vary in accordance with immemorial custom. Here is an example, as I daily witnessed the operation performed on the western confines of Mongolia. One man holds the pony's head, others place the baggage in position on either side, two others again throw a rope all round the pony and baggage, place one foot each delicately against the pony's flank, and then heave until they consider the baggage secure, or until the pony strikes. When this happens, as it not infrequently does, you look placidly on while your most precious belongings are scattered to the four winds of heaven, and a perspiring crowd of men hurl themselves on to the unfortunate animal. In addition to its load, the pony usually finds itself burdened during some part at least of the day's march with the person of its driver. Pack-ponies usually,

though not always, walk in single file, the leading animal, selected for its strength and sagacity, having frequently a bell hung round its neck.

Rivers have, of course, to be negotiated with pack-ponies just as they have with wheeled conveyances. On recognised caravan roads one may find a ferry or bridge, but where one is not travelling by any particular road, one does the best he can, which not infrequently means swimming. I remember crossing a river in Chinese Turkestan in company with some Kirgiz herdsmen. They were unfortunate enough to lose one of their ponies in the current, the animal being swept under and drowned. The misfortune, it seemed, sat lightly upon them. The body was fished ashore, a fire was lighted, and within a very short time they were making a hearty meal off the sodden carcase. The Kirgiz, it may be added, raise large herds of horses, regard horse-flesh as the most savoury of meats, and drink largely of mare's milk.

After the pony the camel. He exists in two varieties — the riding-camel and the baggage-camel. Neither of them, so far as my own experience goes, is calculated to excite either one's enthusiasm or one's admiration. The riding-camel of Baluchistan is a delicate animal

requiring careful treatment, and the baggage-camel is possessed of a sort of supercilious dignity which seems to declare that he is fully conscious of the honour he is doing you by carrying your goods along at the rate of a mile and a half an hour. "His intelligence," as a well-known Indian writer has remarked, "is not of a high order, and if left to himself it is marvellous if he does not do the wrong thing."

I have travelled with camels the whole length of Baluchistan, where the sun sinks daily behind an expanse as flat and as featureless as that of the ocean, and have found them tolerably satisfactory. Not so when I have employed them in crossing the rugged ranges of mountains which run in great parallel ridges from east to west across Eastern Persia. Here I found the camel chiefly a cause to blaspheme, and I have pondered thoughtfully upon the world of wisdom contained in a short account of him by Sir Francis Galton in a little volume entitled 'The Art of Travel.' "Camels are only fit for a few countries and require practised attendants; thorns and rocks lame them, hills sadly impede them, and a wet slippery soil entirely stops them." It was not until I had spent the best part of a winter in travelling twelve hundred miles in daily companionship with camels that I learnt

to appraise at their true value certain lines of Rudyard Kipling:—

"What makes the soldiers 'eart to penk, what makes 'im to perspire?
It isn't standing up to charge, nor lyin' down to fire.
But it's everlastin' waitin' on an everlastin' road
For the commissariat camel an' 'is commissariat load.
The 'orse 'e knows above a bit, the bullock's not a fool,
The elephant's a gentleman, the battery mule's a mule,
But the commissariat cam-u-el, when all is said an' done,
'E's a devil an' a ostridge an' a orphan-child in one."

The Tibetan yak, of which I have spoken, is a shaggy animal known to zoologists under the title of *Bos Grunniens*, and vies with the camel in the leisureliness of its movements. Its chief recommendation is to be found in the fact that it is quite at home at great altitudes, and travels safely over ground which would prove too difficult for horses or mules. I employed the yak at one time for a period of three months, during which I was never at a less altitude than twelve thousand feet, usually at a height exceeding fourteen thousand feet, and not infrequently at altitudes varying from sixteen thousand to nineteen thousand feet — some two thousand or three thousand feet, that is to say, above the summit of Mont Blanc.

The value of human transport varies in different countries. In those parts of the Himalayas with which I am personally acquainted, the load carried averages fifty pounds, and the pay for

a march of from twelve to twenty miles is fourpence. The men are necessarily splendid mountaineers, and look upon a bridge of a single strand of rope with rope hand-rails, which sways giddily high above a foaming torrent, and sags disconcertingly as one advances along it, as the highest expression of the bridge-builder's art. But it is in China that man as a beast of burden is at his best. Throughout the land, those who can afford it or whose dignity demands it travel in sedan chairs carried by two, three, or four bearers. A degree lower than the chair-bearers are the ordinary porters whose powers of endurance are truly remarkable. In Ssu-ch'uan, in Western China, my own bearers carried loads of a hundred and thirty-three pounds apiece, and marched from twenty to thirty miles a-day at rates of pay approximating tenpence per man per day; and instances have been recorded by well-known travellers of porters in this province carrying the almost inconceivable weight of four hundred pounds during daily marches of ten or twelve miles of mountain track.

It now remains, before concluding, to say a word upon the possibilities of water transport. I have pleasant recollections of seven days and seven nights spent upon one occasion in floating peacefully down the broad bosom of the Tigris River on a raft of skins and laths put together

at Mosul and taken to pieces again and sold retail in Baghdad. A less peaceful, though infinitely more exciting time was that spent on one of the Himalayan rivers upon a flimsy construction known locally as a "zuck." The "zuck" consisted of a number of goat-skins blown up by mouth and tied roughly together into an exceedingly fragile whole by the unsophisticated natives of Baltistan; but I must leave the reader to picture for himself the pleasurable excitement of being propelled for thirty miles by the force of the current of a Himalayan river in flood on craft of this kind.

In China the rivers provide a field for the activities of an immense boating population. Argosies of white-sailed junks ply to and fro upon the thousands of miles of her navigable waterways. For over a thousand miles the Yang-tsze is navigated by steamers of considerable size and speed, and beyond, where rapid and gorge render the river unsuitable to steamers, by native junks. A journey over the four or five hundred miles between Ichang and Ch'ung-k'ing amid the magic scenery of the towering gorges, where each fresh turn in the river's winding course opens up a new vista of natural splendour, is a thing not easily forgotten. And if at the end of it the voyager finds that, in common with every other phase of Eastern travel, it demands that he discount the

value of time, yet he will be compelled to admit that in one respect a journey by Chinese junk is unique, in that it alone of all the manifold methods of Eastern travel calls for no expenditure of tissue. For myself, I confess to deriving a greater degree of satisfaction from the contemplation of a day's march done, and from that peculiar joy which is the reward of those "who scorn delights and live laborious days."

CHAPTER III.

A SIBERIAN MYSTERY.

BEFORE the eighteenth century was a decade old, Peter, surnamed the Great, had laid the foundation of one of the world's great capitals — had "flung his city," in the words of the historian, "like a forlorn hope" on the newly conquered shores of the Baltic. That was Peter's way; whatsoever he did, he did it with all his might, working himself with his own strong hands and directing in person with imperious energy the carrying out of his own ideas. "Following the advice God gave to Adam," he wrote in 1696, "I earn my bread by the sweat of my brow," and the early years of the eighteenth century saw him waging desperate warfare with the swamps and marshes of the Neva, and raising literally by force the city that was to become St Petersburg.

Any one who visits the Russian capital to-day can examine for himself, among other things, the church that Peter built. It does not compare

perhaps in wealth and material adornment with the blaze of magnificence presented by the more modern churches of the city—the cathedrals of St Isaacs, of Our Lady of Kazan, and many more; but it stands, nevertheless, a striking monument to Peter's will. Moscow the Holy, the home of the traditions and recollections of the past, must bow her head before the infant capital and appointed centre of Russian regeneration, and so the Tsars of Holy Russia, who for upwards of three centuries had been laid to rest in the cathedral of St Michael in the ancient capital, were henceforth to find their last resting-place in Peter's city in the silent vault beneath the cathedral of St Peter and St Paul. There may be seen at the present day the tombs of all the Tsars save one (Peter II., who died of smallpox at the age of seventeen, was buried at Moscow), who have lived and reigned in St Petersburg.

There is perhaps nothing suggestive of mystery in the long rows of square marble tombs, each one representing a separate link in two centuries of Russian autocracy, that confront the stranger who is curious enough to visit them. Nevertheless, over one at least of them hangs a deep shadow of uncertainty. In November 1825 died Alexander I., Tsar of Russia, at the town of Taganrog, whence his body was transferred in

accordance with custom to St Petersburg for burial. So at least it was recorded for the benefit of posterity. But it has also been recorded, though not officially, that, contrary to custom, people were not allowed to pass by and look upon the face of their late Emperor as he lay in state, and that it was openly declared at the time that, whatever officialdom might say, the body was not that of Alexander. Here are the makings of a pretty mystery.

It is a far cry even in these days of railways from St Petersburg to Tomsk in the heart of Siberia; it was infinitely further before Russia had thrust her ribbon of steel from one end of Asia to the other; yet it is in Tomsk that the key to the mystery is to be found. Any one whose business or pleasure may chance to carry him to this remote centre of Russian rule may study a chapter of Russian history which finds no place in the chronicles of recognised historians.

Tomsk, as all the world knows, is the university town and capital of all Siberia, the chief city, that is to say, of a territory approaching five million square miles in area; yet the convenience of those who would journey there has not even remotely been consulted. The main line has passed it by, and only as an afterthought, seemingly, has a

branch line been constructed to convey one over the sixty miles of swamp and forest that lie between the main line and the capital. So it came about that at an unconscionably early hour one autumn morning I was roused from my broken slumbers and ejected from the comparative comfort of my berth in the Siberian express to be deposited bag and baggage upon the cheerless platform of the wayside station of Taiga. Four hours later I found myself at my destination.

The visitor to Tomsk is likely to be assailed by a variety of sensations: satisfaction at finding that there are hotels for him to live in and restaurants where decent meals are to be had—a satisfaction which will be all the more keenly felt if he has had the misfortune to experience the discomfort of the *numera*, too often the only form of hostelry in Russo-Asiatic towns; disgust at the villainous ways that pass for streets; astonishment at the size and magnificence of many of its buildings; at its air of twentieth century progress and modernity, at its university and museums, its electric light and telephones, its theatres and its shops, and above all, at the size and completeness of its splendid technological institute; and, last but not least, absorbing interest at the chapter of secret history which it guards. It is with this latter subject that I am now concerned.

On November 19 (December 1) 1825, Alex-

ander I., Tsar of Russia, expired in the arms of the Empress Elizabeth. So say the historians; not so the men of Tomsk. There you will learn that what the historians describe as "the premature and mysterious death of Alexander" was nothing more than that monarch's abdication—that for many years, under the disguise of a pious ascetic, he lived a life of prayer and self-abnegation among his subjects in far Siberia, and finally died an old man in 1864 at the house of the merchant Khromoff, and was buried by the monks of Tomsk in the grounds of the Alexis monastery. In proof of which I was taken to the sacred tomb over which a chapel was in process of erection. Of greater interest even than the tomb is the little house—known to this day as "Alexander's house"—in the vicinity of the residence of the deceased merchant Khromoff, where the ascetic spent the greater part of his later years. It is difficult to avoid being seized with something of the enthusiasm of the people as one stands in the small wooden room, scarce 20 feet in length by 18 feet in breadth, furnished only, in the lifetime of its occupant, with the brick stove common to the Siberian settler's home, wooden chair and pallet, and the simple household utensils necessary for everyday existence, but ablaze to-day with golden ikons—expressions of the people's worship and respect. Portraits of monarch and monk adorn the

walls, placed side by side to show the strong resemblance—incontestible proof, you will be told, of their identity.

Here, in brief, is the mysterious chapter of Alexander's life as told by the men of Tomsk. The Tsar, they point out, while yet in the prime of life, was an embittered and a disappointed man. His every action towards the close of his reign was suggestive of a morbid distaste for the position he occupied. And here they can appeal, with no little effect, to the pages of recorded history. Describing his departure for Taganrog, the historian Rambaud writes as follows: "At the moment of his departure he appears to have been shaken by gloomy presentiments, and insisted on a requiem mass being said at the monastery of St Alexander Nevski. In broad daylight lighted tapers were left in his room. At Taganrog Alexander received circumstantial accounts as to the conspiracy of the Society of the South and its schemes of regicide. Cruel recollections of 1801 may have mingled with his melancholy. He thought sadly of the terrible embarrassments which he would bequeath to his successor; of his lost illusions; of his liberal sympathies of former days which, in Poland, as in Russia, had ended in a reaction; of his broken purposes and changed life. In the Crimea he was heard

to repeat, 'They may say what they like of me, but I have lived and will die republican.'"

Such were the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of Tsar Alexander I. from the throne of Russia,—a fitting prelude, surely, to a highly dramatic sequel! The crown and the sceptre were laid aside, the coarse garb and the staff of the mendicant were henceforth to take their place; the privileges and pleasures, the pomp and circumstance attaching to the autocrat of all the Russias, had proved but vanity; the yearning spirit would henceforth seek peace and consolation in a humbler walk in life.

The people of Tomsk, it must be admitted, confess to complete ignorance, at the time, of the exalted rank of the stranger who had mysteriously appeared among them. Fancy and conjecture at all times played briskly round his name, but it was not until after his death that such conjecture assumed the shape which it wears to-day, or developed into definite belief. Feodor Kuzmitch—such was the stranger's name—drifted into Siberia in company with a band of prisoners, having been "moved on" to the land of exile by the frontier police on a charge of vagrancy. For long he lived a quiet and retired life in a village some distance from the capital, and eventually, at the invitation of the merchant Khromoff, whose acquaintance he had

made, took up his abode in the little shelter at Tomsk, known at the present day as "Alexander's House." Here beneath one of the portraits already spoken of you may read his epitaph :—

"The bondservant of God, the old man Feodor Kuzmitch, who passed a hermit life in Tomsk, and died in 1864 in the cell of Khromoff."

On what rests his claim to identity with the abdicated monarch? The people of Tomsk will adduce evidence which, to them at least, admits of no dispute. He was a man of kingly bearing, with a manner that from the first commanded homage from the simple peasant folk. His likeness to the monarch is there for all to see,—here your attention is drawn once more to the pictures which adorn the hut. He himself hid his origin and former life beneath an impenetrable curtain of mystery, and to the frequent questions of his patron Khromoff upon the subject his answer was always, "No, that cannot be revealed—never." But beyond all this it is asserted that immediately prior to his death he handed over to his host papers proving to him beyond all doubt that in the humble anchorite he had been entertaining unawares no less a person than his abdicated emperor. These papers were carefully preserved, and after his death were transferred at his own request to the archives at St Petersburg.

And if further circumstantial evidence be de-

manded, you may learn, as I did, how Alexander II., when heir to the throne, visited the lonely stranger while making a tour of inspection of his Siberian dominions; how for long he remained closeted with him in the house of the priest of a small village near Krasnoyarsk; how the priest, unable longer to restrain his curiosity, screwed up his courage and peeped through the keyhole; and how he was struck dumb with astonishment at there beholding the heir to the throne of all the Russias humbly kneeling before the mysterious monk!

Such is the story of Alexander I. as treasured by the folk of far Siberia. I have given it for what it is worth. You may smile indulgently as you read the tale; but if ever you chance yourself to visit Tomsk and to stand in "Alexander's house" or visit the lonely hermit's grave, you will not fail to be touched by the spell which the belief of a devoted people has woven round the spot. My sojourn in Tomsk has left me many vivid memories, none more vivid or more lasting perhaps than that of a simple peasant devoutly crossing himself as he knelt in earnest prayer on the brink of a lonely grave.

CHAPTER IV.

ACROSS THE HIMALAYAS IN MID-WINTER.

EVERY one has his own ideas as to the relative merits of different forms of sport, and I have heard the partisans of fox-hunting and pig-sticking, big-game shooting and fishing, holding heated arguments, each engaged in the obviously hopeless task of trying to convince the other of the superiority of his own particular and favourite sport. As far as my own experience goes, I have never come across any form of sport that has quite the same fascination as the pursuit of mountain big game, and it was due to my fondness for sport of this particular kind, in conjunction with certain private reasons which rendered it expedient that I should return to civilisation at an early date, that I found myself embarked on a journey which I would not willingly undergo a second time, however strong might be the inducement.

I had for some time been wandering among

the peaks and precipices of the great lonely mountains, in various parts of the Himalayas, and had at length reached a far-off corner of the empire, where the earth lifts up her hoary head, as it were, to the very heavens, and where, amid scenery of the wildest desolation, stand some of the loftiest mountain-peaks in the world. Here, amid crags and precipices of the most appalling description, lives and dies the majestic spiral-horned markhor (*Capra Falconeri*), in the pursuit of which animal I experienced some of the most exciting and arduous stalking it has ever been my lot to enjoy. Thus it came about that after some weeks' most successful hunting, during which I had secured half-a-dozen fine pairs of the much-coveted horns, I found myself cut off from the outer world by huge barriers of mountains, whose snow-bound passes loomed in grim defiance between me and civilisation, making my journey the anxious and dangerous one it was.

There was a good deal to occupy my attention before starting, which caused me to decide to halt at the village of Boonji, on the Indus, for a couple of days, where I might make all the arrangements possible for the journey. There were, in addition to a bungalow occupied by two officers attached to the Gilgit agency, by whom I was most hospitably entertained, a post and telegraph office, and a *tesildah* or native official,

who I knew would be most useful in assisting me to collect coolies for transport. The whole of one morning was devoted to overhauling the baggage and dispensing with as much of it as was possible, for I foresaw that one of my chief difficulties would be likely to arise in connection with transport arrangements. Winter had set in in earnest, with its usual complement of driving snowstorms, biting frosts, and crushing avalanches; and vague rumours of the hardships suffered by those who ventured across the lonely passes of the mountains, of frost-bite, and even of the death from exhaustion and exposure of certain natives who had recently essayed a journey across the mountains, were afloat and obtrusively prominent whenever I broached the subject of transport among the natives. Such rumours were doubtless exaggerated with a view to increasing the rate of hire; but that they were to a certain extent well grounded was obvious when a sorry-looking individual approached me to beg for alms and showed me in the place of hands a wretched withered stump, the result, he assured me, of frost-bite.

Luckily there was no necessity to take tents, there being huts at intervals the whole way; and having discarded all impediments of the kind that I had with me, in addition to all superfluous ammunition and stores, I collected

what remained and arranged it into very light loads, to find that I should require at the least eighteen coolies. This may seem a large number to take all that one requires when travelling light; but it must be remembered that though fifty or sixty pounds is an average load for a coolie under ordinary conditions, he can hardly be expected to carry more than thirty or forty when wading through deep dry snow, if you hope to see him at the end of the day's march: and besides food for the whole party, the horns required three men, the rifles and guns two more, leaving only thirteen for everything else, including stores, bedding, and the small amount of camp furniture I allowed myself.

When everything was ready, plenty of coolies were found willing to go from Boonji, especially when they realised that they were only expected to accompany me as far as Astor, a village a few marches distant, where I was to obtain fresh transport. Among them were three Kashmiris, who had brought grass rope for making the sandal usually worn by the sportsman in the Himalayas, from the fertile valley of Kashmir, earlier in the season, and were only too glad of the opportunity thus afforded of returning to their homes, by volunteering to accompany me and carry loads the whole way. This was satisfactory, and on the 12th of January 1900 I

started them off in charge of my head servant, Ram Pershad,—a strong, thick-set, bow-legged Hindu from Meerut, who had been with me throughout my wanderings, and of whose excellence as a camp servant I cannot speak too highly,—while I remained to spend a last evening with my friends of the Boonji bungalow, and to enjoy once more, before leaving them behind, the many little trifles which go to make life comfortable—well-cooked food, pleasant company, an easy-chair, dry clothes, a warm room, and a score of others, insignificant in themselves, perhaps, and accepted as a matter of course in the ordinary routine of everyday life, but of sufficient importance to make their absence felt and their presence appreciated by any one who may chance to have been in the often unpleasant position of having to do without them. It was, consequently, the 13th of January 1900 when I left the barren sandy valley of the Indus and began the ascent of the mountain-chain before me. In front Nanga Parbat (26,620 feet) frowned down like a giant sentinel on the surrounding country; behind, as far as the eye could see, rose tier upon tier of stupendous mountain-peaks, standing out on the eaves of the "roof of the world," great Haramosh (24,270 feet), Deobunni (20,154 feet), and Rakapushi (25,550 feet).

My way lay up the valley of the Astor

river; but for several miles after leaving the junction of the Astor and the Indus the winding mountain-path zigzagged backwards and forwards up the precipitous sides of the Hattoo Pir, till the river appeared but a tiny thread of silver below me.

I was able to ride this first day's journey, along the narrow mountain-path overhanging sheer precipices of many hundred feet, and by evening reached the small village of Dashkin, a distance of about thirty miles, and caught up the coolies with my baggage, whom I had started off the day before. Henceforth it would be a case of walking, or rather of wading, through interminable stretches of deep powdery snow, in which no sign of road or pathway would be visible beyond the tracks of the hardy post-runners, who for political reasons are employed in keeping up communication as regularly as possible with our distant frontier outposts.

The morning of the 14th broke cold and stormy, and I had not gone far before it came on to snow, great masses of cloud rolling down the mountains and obscuring everything from view with a grey pall of damp chilling fog. The village of Astor—the largest village in these parts—was only fourteen miles distant, and I had no difficulty in reaching it soon after midday, the coolies turning up by evening. All

that night and most of the next day snow fell with persistent monotony, and I was obliged to remain where I was, with no better occupation to distract my thoughts from pondering on the probable state of the passes ahead than watching the great fleecy snowflakes fall softly but with steady persistence to earth.

Still, I was better off than I might have been, for the hut here had been for some time in occupation by the European engineer in charge of the road to Gilgit, whose duties necessitated his living in the district; and though he himself was away at the time, I found the pleasing difference that exists between a furnished abode that has recently been lived in and an unfurnished one that has not, and made the most of such comfort as was to be derived from my surroundings.

I had made myself quite at home, and was sitting comfortably in a capacious arm-chair in front of a cheerful blaze, when I was startled out of a reverie by a fearful bang at the door, which promptly opened inwards to admit a most unlooked-for form of disturbance in the shape of two wild-looking wolves, who tore round the room, much to my perturbation, in an apparent state of frenzy, leaping on to the bed and knocking over the furniture, till reduced to a more tranquil state by the appearance in the doorway

of an individual who performed the offices of cook, and was left in charge when his master was away. He apologised for having neglected to tie up his charges, and expressed a hope that I had been in no way inconvenienced by their somewhat unceremonious entry, assuring me at the same time that they were perfectly quiet and gentlemanly behaved creatures. The description struck me as being just a little tame, especially when a short time afterwards I observed the rabid and unfeeling way in which they tore up and devoured certain portions of raw meat which constituted their daily feed, and wondered if the day might not chance to come when they might so far forget themselves as to tear up in like manner things other than they were meant to. Truly solitude induces one to make strange companions, but I felt that I would put up with a long spell of solitude before I took to wolves as household pets. Dogs are excellent company; cats, and even bears, one might become much attached to, but wolves! Well, there is no accounting for tastes.

The 16th showed an improvement, and in the morning the headman of the district, who had been warned of my probable arrival from Boonji, came round and informed me that he had collected coolies who would accompany me as far as Goorais, the next village of any appreciable size, and as-

sured me that he had picked his men and chosen as strong and hardy a lot as was available. This I had made a great point of, as carrying loads over snow, especially at great altitudes, is very far from child's play; and though life in this part of the world may be cheap (as one might be led to suppose from the tale of the old woman's fond relations, who after due deliberation approached the unfortunate sportsman who had killed her and gravely informed him that they were decided that her value was four annas! —so at least runs the story), yet I had no wish to have any one's death on my hands, if by any reasonable precaution I could possibly avoid it.

When I had seen the men and started them loading up, I dismissed the coolies from Boonji —Baltis for the most part from the borders of Baltistan — and prepared to start on the next march. I left the matter of pay to be decided by the *tesildah* of Astor, who proposed to the men before they started that they should receive six annas—equivalent to sixpence—per man for the first march, which was by way of being an easy one, and double that sum for the succeeding marches, an arrangement which they willingly agreed to. The ordinary pay for an average day's march in most parts of the Himalayas is four annas (fourpence) per coolie; but in the Gilgit agency, which is barren and destitute to a degree,

food is a serious consideration, and six annas a-day is the recognised tariff, two annas of which is deducted if the hirer supplies his men with food. This he is practically bound to do, as when away from his home in these barren districts there is no place where the native can obtain it for himself, and an order has to be procured from the political agent at Gilgit for permission to buy flour from the various Government store-houses which are kept at intervals along the road through the agency, and which are supplied by a continual transport service through the short summer when the passes are open, from the abundant crops of the Kashmir valley. The necessity of preventing the stores from being depleted is obvious, and is one of the chief reasons why the country is closed to travellers and sportsmen, who are bound to have with them a considerable following of servants and coolies, all of whom require to be fed.

At the end of the day's march we halted at a hut known as Godhai, about sixteen miles distant, and here spent the night. The height of Astor, which I had left in the morning, is about 7800 feet, or a rise of, roughly speaking, 4000 feet from the Indus, where I had left it, and in front loomed the dreaded Burzil Pass, with an ascent of close on another 6000 feet. From autumn well on into June this pass is

closed by snow, and the storms that sweep down on it during the winter carry all before them with an overwhelming fury.

The next morning, as no snow was actually falling, we continued our march; but the mountains all round were lost in mist, and the appearance of the sky was far from promising. As we went on along a gradual ascent the snow underfoot became deeper, till by the time we reached Chillum Chauki, a hut near the foot of the Burzil Pass, and our shelter for the night, it lay with an average depth of several feet. The distance of the march was supposed to be about sixteen miles, and I reached the hut at three o'clock; but hour after hour went by with no sign of any coolies with the baggage. At 7.30 Ram Pershad turned up, saying that the coolies made very slow progress through the snow, and were still a long way off, which was anything but comforting, as it was intensely cold and we had no food. About 10.30 a coolie, who had come on ahead of the rest, arrived with a portion of a sheep and some eggs, and Ram Pershad having managed, as only a child of the desert knows how, to cook them without apparatus of any kind, I dined! Soon after one or two more coolies struggled in, and at 11.15 a man with my bedding. I was not very long in getting into it, and immediately fell asleep.

The rest of the coolies arrived about midnight. The cold during the night was severe, and all the more felt owing to its being very damp and raw, the thermometer registering 26° of frost in an atmosphere that was heavy with cloud and fog.

At seven o'clock on the morning of the 18th I saw my coolies off, after dividing up the baggage so as to give every man a very light load, and then set off myself. As the sun rose in the heavens the clouds and fog dispersed, and before long we found ourselves tramping along over a huge stretch of dazzling whiteness, with lofty snow-bound peaks on either side of us, under an absolutely cloudless sky. By ten o'clock we reached the post-runner's hut of Sirdar Khoti, at the foot of the pass, and rested a few minutes before starting on the final ascent. As we left this small sign of human habitation behind us, and became lost in the vast wastes of the wildest desolation, the dead silence, broken only by the laboured breathing of myself and my followers as we slowly forced our way through the deep dry snow, combined with the utter absence of life, filled one with a feeling akin to awe, and forced upon one the smallness and impotence of man amid the stupendous monuments of nature.

In spite of the sun the cold was intense, and every short halt proved how necessary were all

the precautions we had taken against frost-bite. Between one and two o'clock we reached the summit of the pass, and were all glad enough for a short rest in the uninhabited hut which stands upon the top. We could not afford to waste much time, however, for five miles still lay between us and the nearest post-runner's hut, and after a short breathing-space we began the descent, another two and a half hours' scrambling, falling, and sliding bringing us to the post-runner's hut, Burzil Chauki.

The relief on getting into the shade of a room after the fierce glare of the sun on the snow all day was immense; but the cold was very trying, and in spite of a huge wood-fire my thermometer rapidly sank to 8° Fahr. on the window-sill, the temperature in the room itself being only a few degrees higher. As the sun sank behind the mountains, and the stars began to twinkle and shine with extraordinary brilliance, the scene was one which could not fail to impress the most prosaic of mortals. In the dry rarefied air everything stood out with wonderful sharpness of outline, and as the great orb of the full moon rose clear and chill-looking, she seemed to look down in approval upon the cold frost-bound earth beneath her. The thermometer dropped rapidly to zero, but never registered more than 32° during the night, though the cold was probably

much greater beyond the radius of the huge fire which I kept up, and in the morning, when I started again at nine o'clock, it was still freezing 28°. I experienced many trivial annoyances, both on this and other occasions during the march, owing to the low temperature in the interior of the huts; for everything capable of freezing did so, and obstinately refused to be thawed. For several days I was unable to write in anything but pencil, for my ink, though the bottle was quite full, was reduced to a state of solidity, in which state it remained till I reached a warmer clime. It was also annoying to find, on taking up the milk-jug at breakfast, that it was covered with ice, which had to be melted whenever one wished to pour out some milk, for it had only to stand on the table for a few seconds to be reduced to the state of a solid again.

We were blessed with another fine day, and the march of fourteen miles to the next hut passed off uneventfully except for a fright we got shortly before the end of the day's march. We were walking across a steep snow-slide, cutting steps as we went, when there was a sudden sharp sound, resembling the noise made by ice cracking, only very much louder, and my Kashmiris with one accord took to their legs and fled. It was nothing much after all, but served to show how easily an avalanche may be started. For some

reason or other the top layer of snow on the steep snow-slide in front of us had given way, and a few cartloads had crashed down, leaving a ploughed-up patch in the otherwise unbroken surface. All the coolies got in in good time, and I began to congratulate myself on the successful way in which I was getting over my arduous journey; but the smooth course of events was destined to come to an abrupt termination, and before many hours were over the difficulties and hardships of the undertaking were brought home to me in a very realistic manner.

With a suddenness characteristic of the elements in these parts, the whole aspect of the heavens changed in an incredibly short time; and during the night the wind, which for the last two days had been conspicuous by its absence, blew a perfect hurricane. With the advent of dawn it died away, but had done its work; for, in place of the clear blue sky, dense masses of ugly cloud rolled ominously over all the surrounding scene, and by the time we started at 9 A.M. snow was falling steadily, and so thickly that it was impossible to see more than a few yards in any direction. Under the circumstances, I strongly urged the advisability of staying where we were; but my guide maintained that we could reach the next hut, a distance of twelve miles, and concluding that he

must know best, I gave way. Accompanied by him and another Kashmiri, I led the way, followed by the coolies with the baggage. The snow, which was every minute becoming deeper, was dry and powdery, and the going consequently most arduous. It is no doubt a very sound rule never to part from one's baggage, and before very long I had reason and leisure to ponder on the excellence of such a practice; but the coolies made wretchedly slow progress, and in a rash moment, and under pressure of the strong temptation to reach shelter and get out of the swirling, blinding snow as soon as possible, I left them with an escort of a couple of local men to bring them along, and pressed on with the two Kashmiris.

On we went, silent and labouring, all our energy concentrated in getting one foot in front of the other, while the snow fell softly and caressingly to earth, shrouding everything in a thick white pall, till, for all I knew, we might have been going forwards, or backwards, or even round in a circle. For four long hours we forced our way onward without a halt, except for an occasional stop to get our breath, till at last I insisted on a short rest to refresh ourselves with the cold food we had with us. Half an hour I allowed for this, and then on again. Slowly we forced our way through the deep treacherous

snow, coming every now and then across avalanches newly fallen, which caused us to redouble our vigilance on dangerous places.

At last, just as dark was falling, we staggered into the bare hut that was to afford us shelter for the night. Luckily we found a supply of firewood, and after some trouble, owing to the dampness of the wood and the want of draught up the chimney, I induced a fire to burn. This, however, proved to be a new source of discomfort, as the chimney absolutely refused to admit of any smoke going up it, and in a very short time the room was filled with the choking pungent smoke peculiar to damp wood-fires. After this the only conditions on which I was able to have a fire were the window and door wide open, and even then it was hardly bearable. Outside a gale had sprung up, and with the snow, which never ceased falling, created a veritable blizzard. About two feet of fresh snow had fallen since the morning, and the night promised to double it.

Having ransacked the hut, I found the furniture to consist of a couple of wooden chairs, a wooden table, and an old kerosene-oil tin. I luckily had some tea in my pocket, which I speedily turned to account by boiling it in the oil-tin (!), after having first reduced some snow to water, and, in spite of the flavour of smoke and oil, found it most comforting.

Night settled down with a darkness that could almost be felt, and as the hours passed by, and none of the coolies or servants turned up, a terrible and sickening fear laid hold of me and refused to be shaken off; for well I knew the danger of the silent merciless avalanche. Only a few days before a European telegraph-signaller, accompanied by a party of seven or eight natives, who had been up to repair the telegraph line, which was suffering from one of the chronic winter interruptions to which it is liable, had been swept away without a warning, on a portion of the very ground which I had so lately traversed. An exclamation, a sudden cry, a blinding flash of dazzling whiteness, as the mountain-side gave way, sweeping down upon its victims, swift, silent, inexorable, and all was over. A single individual a little apart from the rest, after being buried to the head on the extreme edge of the avalanche, was spared to tell the harrowing tale. The fear of death is born in us, and he who can honestly say that he fears not death is more than human; yet to look death in the face, when circumstances force it before our vision, is to be moved by something besides our natural feelings of terror. In the realisation of the nearness of the angel of death, the distorted picture of life we are so accustomed to see by the light of our daily lives is suddenly straight-

ened; the greater issues at stake assume their true proportion, and the trivialities to which we are wont to attach so much importance as too often to fill up the whole of the picture, for once fall back into proper focus, and we see things as they are. I well remember, and hope I shall never forget, the feelings with which I was filled as I stood on the ploughed-up mass of snow from which had but lately been dug the bodies of the victims of the avalanche, and in that moment knew that it was in greater hands than man's that the threads of our lives were held, and that, were our fate to be the same which had so lately overtaken others on this very spot, or were we to be guided safely to the end of our journey, an omniscient Providence ordereth all things for the best.

Yet as darkness, which seemed tangible, came down upon the earth and cut me off from my men still battling with the elements, and still, for aught I knew, far from shelter, fear for them, far greater than any I had ever felt for myself, took hold of me, and, fight against it as I would, overwhelmed me with an anxiety that made the night the most terrible I have ever spent. By 10 P.M. I gave up all hope of seeing them, at any rate before morning, and took counsel with myself as to the best way of whiling away the weary hours till daylight. There

was little enough choice when I came to consider it. Here I was in a cheerless hut, with no food or blankets, damp steamy clothes, and in darkness except for the fitful flame of the smoky fire. I lay down on the hard wooden floor in front of the fire, and, in spite of physical discomfort and anxiety, worn out as I was by the toil of the day, dropped off every now and then into a troubled sleep.

Slowly the long winter night wore on, and when daylight at length began to make the darkness visible, it was only to show that snow was falling with the same persistent monotony. I was stiff and cramped after the long night in wet clothes on the hard wooden floor, my eyes aching and bloodshot, and my voice hoarse from the stifling pungent smoke; and with a hungry wolfish look, if my expression in any way corresponded to my feelings. I told one of the Kashmiris he must get to a village a short distance off and procure food at all costs, and also try and collect men to form a search-party, though I doubted his being able to do this while the storm raged. He went off, and I did not see him again for many hours; but imagine my joy when, a couple of hours later, I made out a small black speck on the general monochrome of white, which slowly, very slowly, got nearer and more distinct, resolving itself

finally into a straggling line of woe-begone battered-looking men — a portion of my coolies. When they reached me, and I had had some food, which I was much in need of, I heard their tale. They had struggled on well into the night, when, utterly exhausted and worn out, they had reached a small village, where they had got shelter. Three of them had been caught by a small avalanche, but had mercifully been extricated by the rest before it was too late. Six of them were still out, and these latter did not turn up for four days.

A little farther back on the track over which we had just come—though this I did not learn till later, when the terrors of the mountains were behind me—a post-runner met his fate, lost in the heart of the great lonely mountains, a single unit in the great sea of humanity, who would, when the mail did not turn up, form the subject of an official document, in which he would be described as "Missing."

For three more days and nights the storm raged with unabated violence, while I was a prisoner in the wretched cheerless hut, unable to have even a fire, except for a few minutes at a time, when my feet and hands became so numb with cold as to be unbearable.

At last, on the 24th, the mist rolled up like a curtain, revealing once more the surrounding

objects; the storm-clouds parted and the sun peeped through, cheering us once more with the warmth of his rays. I took the precaution of remaining where I was for the day, as my guide warned me that the first day of bright sun after a storm was the most dangerous, as then the newly fallen snow came down in great avalanches from the precipitous cliffs, and woe betide the man who is caught by one of these.

On the 25th I started before daylight, in the hope of getting to the end of the day's march early, in case the sun should come out hot during the day, and cause the snow to come down the precipitous sides of the valley through which my route lay. The going was fearful, for we sank deep at every step, and as the day dawned, the sky, which had been clear, became overcast, and at midday snow began to fall. After going about ten miles, our way led us uphill again, towards the foot of the pass known as the Raj Diangan, and I have seldom experienced more unpleasant ground to get over than I did for the next few miles. It seemed we were walking over a water-channel filled with great boulders, though, owing to the depth of the snow, we appeared to be walking on level ground, till, with a sudden shock, one found oneself in a hole between the rocks, con-

cealed by the treacherous snow. This continued for several miles, and by the time I reached the hut Gurai, a distance of fifteen miles in all, which had taken us from before daylight to late in the afternoon, I was absolutely exhausted. A few days before, during the recent storm, an avalanche had come down close to the hut, burying a small stream, the water-supply of the place, and I found a well many feet deep in the snow just completed by the post-runners.

As darkness came down with no diminution of the snowstorm, and no coolies turned up, I looked forward to another night such as I had spent on the 20th; and had settled down on the floor and was half asleep, when I was roused by shouts outside, and in a few minutes a coolie burst into the hut. He told me that the rest had been unable to reach me, but were safe in a small village a couple of miles off. He himself and one other had struggled on with food and blankets, but his companion had given up, and he had lost him in the dark. This news was so far satisfactory in that I knew that the coolies, all excepting one, were safe; and, fortified with the cold food and blankets which the man had brought, I managed to pass a better night than might have been expected.

With day snow ceased falling, and as I was gazing anxiously over the huge undulating snow-fields, a sorry spectacle met my eye. Slowly and with halting step a gaunt figure, with a pinched and starved appearance, approached us. On his reaching us I noticed something which made me put out my hand and feel him. His clothes were hard and stiff as boards. The men stood staring and uttering exclamations in an idiotic imbecile sort of way, till I made them understand that the man was at once to be thawed, when they set to work with a will, pommelling and rubbing him till the wretched individual cried out in pain. It was the coolie who had started with the man who had brought me food and bedding the night before. How he had lived through the night I cannot imagine, for sure enough he had spent it in the snow, and his escape to tell the tale seemed almost a miracle.

Shortly afterwards the remainder of the coolies arrived, and after a few minutes for them to rest, we started on the ascent of the Raj Diangan. I took the precaution, after recent experiences, of bringing a couple of strong men along with me, carrying food and blankets; for I feared that the coolies, who seemed exhausted, might not reach the hut at Tragbal by night. The day was fine, and, in spite of the severe

labour of scaling the pass through the deep snow, the spirits of all were higher than they had been for many days, for we were within view of the end of our hardships, and the danger to which we had been daily exposed, of being swept away silently and without warning by the deadly avalanche, would be over on our arrival at the summit of the pass. Hour after hour I forced myself to go on, till I felt as if I must sink down and rest in the soft enticing snow; but the danger was too great, and I at length reached the log-hut over the summit of the pass just as night was falling. Most of the coolies got in at different hours of the night; but a few remained in a post-runner's shanty a few miles back till the next day.

As I left Tragbal on the 27th, and saw the huge expanse of the Vale of Kashmir spread out like a map beneath me, and knew that I had at length reached the edge of the great mountain-chain across which I had been marching, I was filled with a feeling of profound relief and thankfulness.

A few miles straight down the mountain-side, through deep snow and over slippery patches of ice, and I found myself on the banks of the Woolar Lake, where a Kashmiri boat, known as a *dunga*, was awaiting me; and a few hours

later, my servants and baggage having been got on board, we started for Srinagar. Two and a half days' paddling through the Woolar Lake and up the river Jhelum brought us to the capital and civilisation, and my journey across the Himalayas was at an end.

PART II.

THE MIDDLE EAST

CHAPTER V.

THE RUSSIAN OIL-FIELDS, AND THE VISITATION OF 1905.

DURING the year 1905 the poisonous virus with which the whole system of Russian national life had for so long been impregnated, gave increasingly frequent manifestation of its virulent nature. Strikes and labour riots followed one another with such bewildering rapidity, that the amazed onlooker found himself wondering how it was that a doomed bureaucracy still sat ensconced in the high places of St Petersburg, or that the grim image of autocracy still smiled sardonically upon its victims from its pedestal of clay.

The eruption which broke out at Baku proved to be volcanic in its destructiveness. For some time past the regions of Trans-Caucasia had been known to be in a state of seething irritation, and the smouldering embers of race hatred and social discontent, fanned into activity by a fatuous administration, at length blazed up in a widespread

and devastating conflagration. An outbreak of labour against its employers, immeasurably aggravated by a simultaneous outburst of inter-racial war, incited by the ever-present hatred of rival races and rival creeds, succeeded in perpetrating in an important centre of Russian industry a stupendous holocaust, and in drenching the oil-fields of the Caspian in a veritable sea of blood.

The administration responsible for the preservation of law and order could not plead ignorance of the brewing of the storm. Premonitory symptoms had been reported in vain by the oil-masters to the Government; and blame for the scourge of pillage, incendiarism, and massacre, culminating in unlimited anarchy, which swept over Baku and its neighbourhood, had undoubtedly to be laid at the official door. Only a week before the reign of terror and destruction swept over the land the oil companies had begged for the despatch of troops; but their representations were callously ignored, for the authorities were preoccupied elsewhere in a not altogether successful endeavour to quell the wholesale massacres which were desolating adjoining provinces at Elizabetpol and Shusha.

Riots, outbreaks, and massacres in the dominions of the Tsar had become matters of such ordinary occurrence, as to have ceased to excite in the general public here in England anything more than a passing interest. The casual news-reader

shuddered, it might be, at accounts more than usually hideous in detail with which his daily paper from time to time provided him; and the sensation of which he was for the moment chiefly conscious was in all probability one of passing amazement at the civilisation of the twentieth century as practised in Holy Russia—and that was all. But in the destruction of the oil-fields millions of British capital were involved, and amid the fighting and bloodshed at Baku English lives were at stake; and the fact that the British Ambassador at St Petersburg found it necessary to send more than one urgent appeal during the early autumn of 1905 to Count Lamsdorff for protection for the lives and property of British subjects, affords sufficient evidence of the extent to which Englishmen were affected. There is, then, no need of further excuse for an endeavour to put before the public some idea of the industry upon which this tragic example of Russian official incompetence fell, or of the magnitude of the interests which were involved.

Baku itself is a modern town with all the outward indications of a thriving prosperity. Imposing stone buildings, commodious shops with plate-glass windows, comfortable hotels, and first-class restaurants give it an air of comfort and good living by no means warranted by its physical surroundings. The country, indeed, is as unattractive

to-day as when seen and described by the adventurous O'Donovan more than a quarter of a century ago. "For leagues around," he wrote at that time, "not a blade of grass is to be seen, and not even a shrub breaks the arid expanse of broken strata and scorched marl." With this description fresh in his mind, the visitor is prepared for the further information which acquaintance with the town provides, to the effect that the only fresh water to be had is obtained by distillation of the salt waters of the Caspian Sea. The name Baku, signifying "a place beaten by the winds," or as a resident acquaintance of mine more bluntly if less classically put it, "windy hole," is in itself sufficient indication of the climate which the place enjoys. Certainly Baku, with such comfort and attraction as it possesses, is before all else artificial —the creation of money and of luxury-loving man.

All round on the Ansheronsk peninsula, which juts out eastward into the Caspian Sea, great forests of *derricks,* queer, grimy-looking, pyramidal erections, mark the sites of the oil-fields which are responsible for the existence of the town. Some idea of the magnitude of the industry may be gained when I mention that according to Russian statistics which I obtained upon the spot, the output of the Baku oil-fields in 1901 amounted to 10,822,580 tons, of which amount 7,837,096 tons were exported, the average daily yield of

the wells on the Ansheronsk peninsula amounting to 29,661 tons. In the same year the other great oil-producing centre of the world, the petroleum fields of Lima and Pennsylvania in the United States, showed an output of 6,509,677 tons, with an export of 3,306,451 tons, the average daily yield of these wells falling short of that of the wells of the Caspian littoral by 11,463 tons.

The phenomena occurring in the country round Baku are, as is only to be expected in a land so curiously endowed by nature, of no ordinary interest or kind. Many years ago it was recorded by one Guthrie, a traveller in Persia, that "in Taurida in any piece of ground where springs of naphtha obtain, by merely sticking an iron tube into the earth and applying a light to the upper end, the mineral oil will burn till the tube is decomposed, or for a vast number of years"; the accuracy of which statement can be tested by any one to-day. I prodded a hole in the ground not far from the site of an ancient fire-temple, and on applying a light raised a flame several feet in height. Natural issues of gas and oil make it possible, indeed, to literally set the Caspian on fire in the sheltered creeks of the Ansheronsk peninsula. Small wonder that Sir F. Goldsmid should have been betrayed into enthusiasm when describing his impressions of his visit there: "To say that these fires are curious or worth seeing is to say nothing. They

are marvellous, and worthy of classification among natural wonders."

But curious as are the natural characteristics of the country, the strangeness of its appearance has been infinitely added to by the devising hand of man. Imagine a stretch of barren ground from which rise hundreds of pyramid-shaped towers all packed as closely to one another as the trees of a forest; picture to yourself further a lurid atmosphere heavy with the reek of oil, and throbbing with a wild medley of sounds almost defying classification—the grunting and groaning of pulley and windlass, the panting of engines, and a roar and hiss like the rushing of many waters which issues from furnaces where liquid fuel is in vogue—and you have some faint conception of the weird spectacle presented by the great oil-field of Balakhani. And Balakhani is but one of the oil-fields of the Caspian. Each one of the pyramid-like erections, known technically as *derricks*, represents an oil-well which is producing, or has produced in its time, many tons of oil a-day, and on the Ansheronsk peninsula there are in round numbers some two thousand of these erections.

There is something fascinating in watching the operations that go on under cover of a derrick. A hollow metal cylinder is let down a boring a few inches in diameter, two thousand feet perhaps into the bowels of the earth. The level of

the oil having been reached, the engine is reversed, and the cylinder now filled with the crude product is drawn laboriously to the surface once more. Here the vessel is emptied automatically into a trough, whence the rich, slimy-looking, dark green fluid, with its glittering pink froth, passes into reservoirs to await its final journey to the refineries. I watched a baler on the Bibi Eibat field making its journey backwards and forwards into the depths of the earth, and became conscious of a sensation approaching respect for an implement that with clockwork precision and regularity was raising its hundred tons of oil a-day. But any sensation produced by the steady labour of the baler pales into insignificance before the wild enthusiasm excited by the magnificent irresponsibility of a "spouter." It is only possible to picture faintly in imagination something of the feelings of the man who has been fortunate enough to strike a spouter; amid a host of others, the wild exhilaration of the gambler who has succeeded in bringing off a gigantic *coup* is probably predominant. The spouter is, indeed, a magnificent thing. It is gloriously indifferent to restraint. It probably blows your derrick to matchwood; but then it throws up anything from 7000 to 10,000 tons of marketable oil—say roughly from £350,000 to £500,000—in the course of twenty-four hours;

and what is the cost of a mere derrick compared to this? It is possessed of a violent vitality, and forces its way irresistibly through all obstacles that happen in its path. Men who have had experience of such things have told me much concerning them, inspiring me with something of their own enthusiasm as they talked; and I listened credulously to the tale of one which bored a hole as clean as a drill through a nine-inch steel plate—placed there with a view to controlling as far as might be the vagaries of its flight—in something less than three hours!

Of course you cannot burrow hundreds—perhaps thousands—of feet down into the interior of the earth for nothing. On an average it will cost you £5000 to sink an oil-well. And when you have done so you will be very careful to see that your boring is kept clear. When you bear in mind that the small circular well, penetrating from 1500 to 2000 feet into the bosom of the earth, is only a few inches in diameter at the surface and becomes less rather than more as it descends, you can form some idea of the unutterable calamity which will have befallen you in the event of some small object such as an implement happening to fall down and get stuck in your narrow shaft. You may, with the aid of one of the many ingenious contrivances devised for the purpose, succeed in fishing it out, or in

the event of this proving impracticable in laboriously grinding it to powder; but, as may easily be imagined, there is no certainty about an operation of so delicate a nature. I heard of one company that fished for implements thus fallen for five months, and then gave it up and bored a new well.

Such in brief is the general impression imprinted upon the mind by a visit to Baku and the neighbouring oil-fields, which, as already described, became in 1905 the scene of anarchy and sanguinary civil war. A few statistics may perhaps assist the imagination in forming some idea of the magnitude and importance of the industry, which, for the time being at any rate, was reduced to a state of absolute wreckage and collapse.

The aggregate depth bored in sinking new wells and deepening old ones amounted in 1902 to little less than 46 miles, while in 1900 it actually reached the astonishing figure of 94 miles 84 yards. In the course of the year 1902, 1895 wells on the Ansheronsk peninsula yielded 10,266,594 tons of naphtha, an average, that is to say, of 5417¾ tons per well. These figures were even larger in the previous year, a total of 1924 wells being responsible for an output of 10,822,580⅔ tons, of which no less than 7,837,096¾ tons were exported in the shape of kerosene,

lubricants, naphtha-residues, and raw naphtha, the residues used as fuel, being responsible for the bulk of this total, with a weight not far short of 5,000,000 tons. The impetus given to the industry during the closing years of the nineteenth century may be judged from the fact that the 324 wells reported as yielding oil in December 1892 had increased to 1423 in the same month of 1902, and that the output of the year 1901 showed an increase of 10,467,742 tons on that of twenty years before. The number of wells which have become inactive has naturally risen rapidly with this largely increased production, as many as 1273 wells having ceased yielding in 1901 as compared with 842 in the previous year and 594 in 1899. This increase in the number of dry wells has of course been counteracted by an increased energy in the sinking of new wells, the returns showing a total of 200 new wells sunk in 1892, 564 in 1902, and the tremendous figure of 1010 in 1900.

It is not easy to compute the exact amount of English capital which was invested in the industry, but that it was very large may be seen from the fact that the issued capital of the six most important English companies engaged in it amounted alone to close upon £5,000,000. Nor is it easy to estimate with any degree of accuracy the total amount of damage

done. An extreme pessimism was the dominant note of all the early reports of the disaster, which were unanimous in painting a sombre picture of ruin and collapse. The plant of the oil-wells on the Bibi Eibat field was burned out, and the depôts of the Caspian Company destroyed. The oil-wells of Balakhani, Roumani, and Sabuntchi[1] were in flames, oil-towers and store-houses were wrecked, 100,000 workless fugitives were thrown starving upon the land; ruin, in other words, colossal and complete, stared the industry in the face, involving serious consequences to the trade and commerce of the country, and a loss of about £20,000,000 annually to the State revenue from excise. Such was the tenor of the reports which gave to the world the news of the storm of violence and disorder which had broken over Russia. With the comparative lull which succeeded the first fierce outburst of anarchy and carnage, admitting of a more sober view, the measure of the earlier estimates of the disaster received some modification. The Englishmen whose lives had been imperilled at Balakhani were gallantly rescued by Mr Urquhart, afterwards appointed British Vice-

[1] The output of these estates in 1901 was as follows:—

Bibi Eibat	2,147,354 tons.
Sabuntchi	4,709,444 „
Roumani	1,995,377 „
Balakhani	1,892,954 „

Consul, whose knowledge of the language and customs of the country stood him in good stead in his perilous adventure. The Bibi Eibat estate, too, fortunately escaped the full force of the human tornado, which spent itself largely upon the district of Balakhani. The losses in addition to those caused by stoppage of production were set down at from £4,000,000 to £5,000,000, though, according to another and more likely account issued at the time, an outlay of £8,000,000 would be required to put the wells in working order again, and for the reconstruction of the workmen's barracks and the purchase of new machinery.[1] Nor was it the oil-masters alone who suffered from the collapse of the oil industry. The report which reached this country to the effect that whereas the refineries had saved stores of kerosene sufficient to last a year, the residue was all exhausted, was of serious import to all those concerns dependent upon steam-power which look to naphtha-residue for fuel, such as the milling industry of Moscow and the railways and shipping of the district. The total direct losses, indeed, to the different concerns, including the railways and shipping on the Volga and the

[1] Telegrams appeared in the press stating that the plants of 21 oil companies and 13 private owners had been completely destroyed. The Baku Company lost a third of its derricks, the Nobel Company 40 per cent, and the Born Company 50 per cent. Of Messrs Rothschilds' properties only one was said to be intact.

Caspian, were early estimated at upwards of £19,000,000.

But to appreciate the true significance of the situation which had thus arisen in the Caucasus in all its bearings, it is necessary to look beyond the mere loss in pounds, shillings, and pence. It has been affirmed by no less an authority than the great oil-fields proprietor, M. Nobel, that the crisis of 1905 was the outcome of a political labour war—itself the offspring of the oft-ignored demands of a people for reform. Such things of themselves predicate a serious failing in the health of nations. They become infinitely more serious when complicated, as in the present case, by disintegrating external influences, such as racial and religious war. The spectacle of the might and power of Russia crumbling away before the onslaught of an Asiatic nation in the Far East had not been lost upon the populations of the Asiatic dominions of the Tsar. Mingled with the reports of the great calamity came stories of hordes of Tartar horsemen rising to the cry of the prophet; of bands of turbulent Kurds pouring down from the Persian highlands to swell the tide of revolt that was sweeping across the country; of the crescent and green banner of Islam being raised aloft in open revolt against the Cross of Christianity. The proclamation of a holy war

had indeed been made infinitely more likely by the recent rule of Prince Galitzin, who inaugurated the fatal policy of playing off Tartar against Armenian—a policy which, as the 'Times' remarked, could only be described as Turkish in its complexion, and which was largely instrumental in bringing about a cataclysm at which the civilised world might well look on appalled.

By the first week in September the extreme urgency of the situation could no longer be ignored even by Russian officialdom, and for the rest of that month the authorities had their hands full in despatching troops to the various centres of disaffection. All the atrocities for which we are accustomed to look when Russia is occupied in restoring order with the Cossack and the knout, were added to the ghastly tale of horror inseparable from every phase of Eastern civil war. The soldiers, indeed, who were expected to cope with the elements of disorder, seem as often as not to have added materially to the confusion and disaster. Like the Kurdish levies of the Sultan, who regard their royal title of Hamidiyeh in the light of a warrant for indulging in indiscriminate slaughter whenever opportunity occurs, the Cossacks seem to have waged war impartially upon friend and foe, and to have fought ruthlessly, neither asking nor giving quarter, with all who chanced to

come their way. They trained artillery upon and wrecked the offices of the English manager of four large companies. In company with the Tartar insurgents they hemmed in a band of four hundred Armenians, whom, despite their frantic requests to the Governor for help, they butchered to a man. *Suaviter in modo* is no more the motto of the Russian Cossack than it is of the Eastern fanatic. Tales sickening in the intensity of their pathos poured in from the theatre of strife, which for days was converted into a perfect maelstrom of human passion. Men, women, and children were indescribably tortured and butchered in batches by the fierce Asiatics, driven to frenzy by their lust for blood. Violence begets violence and hatred hate. The Russian artillery that shelled the hospital at Balakhani, in which were packed close upon a thousand Armenians and workmen, were in their turn fallen upon by the infuriated mob and forced to retire under showers of boiling oil. Incendiarism, pillage, outrage, and massacre—the incarnation of barbarous war, in other words, in its most gruesome guise, laid its palsied hand heavily upon the great oil city and its neighbourhood.

Such is the tale of the grim visitation of 1905. Small wonder if British capital took fright. Small wonder, too, if it has been shy

of returning to a scene where it once experienced such rough handling. Nevertheless, the vast oil-beds of Caucasia should yet provide a wide field for the play of British capital and enterprise. The scourge which left its mark upon Baku in 1905 has passed away. Capital —and especially British capital—is even now being attracted to new borings among the foothills of the Caucasus; and who shall say that the day may not be at hand when the glory of Maikop will outshine even that of Baku at its prime.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NUSHKI-SISTAN TRADE ROUTE.

(A Paper read before the Scottish Geographical Society, 6th February 1902.)

WITH a view to travelling along the recently opened trade route between India and Persia, across Baluchistan, I journeyed to Quetta at the end of October 1900, reaching that place on the 1st November. Here I spent ten days making final preparations, and engaged the servants I required to accompany me as far as Mashhad. These consisted of seven Indian servants and a daffidar and three sowars of the local levy from Nushki, to act as escort. By the 9th everything was ready, and I started off my caravan of baggage camels in charge of the servants and sowars, keeping behind with me the Baluchi daffidar Ralmat Khan and two of my Indian servants with our ponies and riding camels. This to give the caravan a day's start and to enable us to get through a long march on the morrow.

A curious white mist hung over Quetta on the morning of the 10th, hiding it from view as I cantered along the road accompanied by Ralmat Khan and the servants on their camels. After leaving the main road a few miles from the town, we made our way by a camel track over flat stretches of sand and gravel, covered for the most part with brown tufts of aromatic wormwood, with ridges of barren hills running parallel on either side. Here and there we passed small villages, mere clumps of low, flat-roofed mud huts, whose existence must inevitably come to an untimely end should the country ever be visited by anything like prolonged rain,—miserable evidence of human existence, low and squat-looking, with no apparent aperture beyond an ill-shaped hole, presumably the door.

In parts the track was very stony, and anything beyond a walk out of the question; but at others sand took the place of stone, and we were able to go along at a canter. At sixteen miles we passed the levy post of Girdi Talab, and another sixteen brought us to Kanak, where I found my camp and spent the night.

Kanak is a levy post such as exist, or are in process of construction, at intervals of from fifteen to fifty miles, the whole way from Quetta to Sistan. They consist of mud forts known as "thanas," built square and with an erection in

one or more of the angles in the form of a tower. In these thanas live a daffidar and a few sowars raised locally, who, mounted sometimes on ponies, sometimes on camels, carry the mail-bag from thana to thana, thus maintaining the only communication that exists between Sistan and the nearest British post of any account—Quetta; a distance of something like 500 miles over the deserted wastes of Baluchistan.

I left Kanak at 9 A.M., having sent my advance camp on during the night, and rode over the same sandy and stony plateau, with its covering of wormwood, crossing a low ridge of hills, after going a few miles, by a pass known as the Barak, and then on over level ground again till I reached camp pitched by a small partially deserted village, Girdi Gab. The village was the same miserable affair as all the others I had passed on the road, a huddled-up collection of low mud huts, which in this case were rapidly falling into decay; the headman, who had been given some money by the Government a year before, with a view to the improvement of his village, having promptly decamped and bolted into Afghanistan, money and all, where he had remained under the protection of the Amir ever since.

At 9 A.M. on the 12th I started for Kishingi, our next halt. The road was still, as it had

been the whole way since leaving the high-road about six miles from Quetta, a mere camel-track. At one place, a pass among some low hills, we came across a small pool of water and had lunch, after which we cantered on again till we reached camp at Kishingi, about twenty-four miles. There was no village here, but a small mud fort in process of building.

On the 13th we started as usual about 9 o'clock, and after covering some miles, reached the edge of the plateau along which the track had run since leaving Quetta. From here our path descended somewhat abruptly through a labyrinth of small hills and knolls, among which it wound till it debouched on to the plain on which Nushki stands. I inquired the name of the defile by which we had descended; but all that I could make out from my followers was that it was "khand," which is merely the "Pushtu" word for a pass, so I conclude that it has no name.

On reaching the plain we were met by a party of about twenty men in many-coloured garments and mounted on gaily caparisoned steeds, with wonderful saddle-cloths of gorgeous design and colour—the aristocracy of the Nushki district.

A little farther on we came in sight of Nushki itself. It appeared to be little more

than a glorified edition of all the other villages we had seen,—the same one-storey mud houses, though with something more like method displayed in the ground-plan of the place. A broad street led through the centre, faced at the far end by a large rectangular building, also of mud, which contained the police lines, the levy lines, and the post-office. A short way from the main street, and clear of the town, stands a hospital, and beyond this again a caravanserai for the use of "kafilahs" or caravans; these with about 120 shops go to make the town of Nushki, which all told probably consists of about 200 houses. The population is at present hardly in proportion to the size of the town, as I was informed that it was only about 250 people; but the place is young, the land having been but lately acquired by Government; and considering that three or four years ago there was nothing, the progress made must be considered fair. Along one side of the town flows a small stream, the Kaisar, which forms the water-supply of the place, and growing on its banks were to be seen about a dozen trees, scattered here and there, in clumps of two or three, looking quaintly out of place amid the surrounding chaos of sand and stone. Passing through the town we emerged on the far side to find camp pitched at the foot of a small hill.

Over the plain to the north, and clearly visible from our camp, could be seen what appeared to be a small mound of rock, but what was in reality a hill of considerable size, on the top of which stands a stone, one of the boundary pillars between the lands of his Highness the Amir of Afghanistan and Baluchistan, beyond which lies forbidden ground; but with the exception of this, the objects of interest at Nushki are few, and there is nothing to induce one to prolong one's stay further than is actually necessary to rest the camels.

The future growth and prosperity of Nushki must depend upon whether it or Quetta is to be the starting-point of caravans to cross the desolate stretches which lie between it and Sistan. At present kafilahs make it a halting-place, as they have perforce to go on to Quetta; but it appeared to me as I came along that a line from Quetta would be by no means an impossible undertaking, and in the event of such a line being constructed, Nushki would undoubtedly become a large and flourishing place. Whether the water-supply would under such altered circumstances be equal to the demand is another matter.

That Nushki is a far more suitable starting-point and terminus to the caravan route than Quetta must be perfectly obvious to any one who

has seen the two places: the large, open stretches round Nushki, capable of affording ample grazing for any number of camels, being wanting at Quetta; while standing as it does on the plain, at the same level practically as the whole of the route to Sistan, the assent of over 2000 feet to the Quetta plateau, most unsuitable to camel transport, is obviated. Since I was at Nushki, sanction has been given for a survey to be made with a view to building a line from Quetta, so that we may hope before long to see Nushki constituted the terminus of the caravan route.[1]

We started off again on the morning of the 15th, our way lying south-west over a perfectly flat plain towards a mountain-peak, Sheikh Husain, which stood up from the plain to a height of upwards of 7000 feet above sea-level, beneath whose jet-black sides lay our next camp. Before long we became enveloped in a thick white mist—a most unusual phenomenon I should imagine in this burnt-up corner of the earth—which obliterated everything most effectually, and the next thing we did was to get off the track. This was by no means difficult, as everything looked exactly the same in the fog, and there was absolutely nothing to guide us. The track, too, was merely marked off from the rest of the plain by a broken line of small stones, and here and there by a very

[1] The line in question has since been built.

shallow ditch, and it was some time before any of us realised that we were off it. When it cleared at about midday, we found we were a good deal north-west of where we ought to have been, with the result that we did not get into camp till after 4 o'clock. We ought, I believe, to have passed at least two villages on the way; but owing to the fog, we had missed them both, and for all I saw the country might have been totally devoid of human habitation.

From the foot of Sheikh Husain the road took us along close under the Kharan mountains, while to the north stretched miles of sand, covered with stunted tamarisk, and broken here and there in the far distance by low hills. On the 17th we camped at Kuchaki Chah, a small thana and well in the middle of a dreary plain of black gravel at the foot of the mountains, at which dismal spot I was most reluctantly compelled to halt owing to an attack of fever; but I was sufficiently recovered to go on again on the 19th, when we reached Padag. The weather was boisterous and most unpleasant, rain being varied by severe gales of wind. After spending a few days in an unsuccessful search for ibex in the Kharan hills, I reached the next thana, Yadgar Chah, on the 24th.

A long march of thirty-one miles or thereabouts brought me to Dalbandin. The track led through collections of yellow sandhills, from which it would

emerge here and there on to vast level stretches of sun-baked earth, over which it ran in an absolutely straight line far as the eye could see. The physical aspect of the country showed little change, though as we approached Dalbandin the Kharan hills receded to the south, and the Chagai hills came into view on the north. Technically the country through which the route passes cannot be described as a desert, there being sufficient grazing to support life—camel-life at least—in many parts, and in a few places even a possibility of cultivation; nor is it composed of the dreaded sea of yellow sand which constitutes the genuine desert, such as exists not very far north of the present trade route; but after a desert, I should imagine a country such as this, consisting of deserted tracts of sand, earth, or gravel, whose hideous monotony remains unbroken except by a vision of hills, mere excrescences apparently of the unvaried plain, is the most dreary and uninteresting to travel over.

Dalbandin may be described as the end of the first section of the road from Nushki, and bowing down before the god "dastur" (custom), in spite of their having had an easy time, I allowed the camels and men to halt, in order that they should have no possible reason for grumbling. The post differs little from others along the road, except that a bungalow for travellers has been erected,

and the thana, which is a large one, contains a post-office. The water is good and is brought by a "karez" from the hills on the north.

In the neighbourhood of the thana an attempt was being made to grow dates, and about a hundred young date-palms had, I was told, been planted; but whether the conditions which according to the proverb are necessary, that they must be grown with their feet in water and their heads in fire, will be realised, remains to be seen.

The weather, which, ever since I had left Nushki, had been most disagreeable, now became what I had been led to believe I should experience the whole way—cold and brilliant star-lit nights, and cloudless skies by day; indeed, it was cold enough up to ten o'clock to make one look forward to the warmth of midday; but from then on to sunset it was as pleasant as one could wish, the sun's rays being quite hot enough in the middle of the day.

From Dalbandin the road led at times through ground broken by low ridges and mounds, at others over great plains of black gravel, where vegetation all but ceased, and then again over stretches of sand and stony ground, where tamarisk and dwarf palm grew. At Yujaki, about thirty miles from Dalbandin, where I camped on the 27th, there was no thana, but a single shed, roughly built of unshaped stone, and used pre-

sumably as a shelter by the post-carriers and passing caravans. The water, too, was brackish; but, having been informed of this before leaving Dalbandin, I had brought several skinfuls of sweet water with me, which was sufficient for drinking purposes till I reached good water again at Merui.

Merui, about twenty-one miles on, consists of a thana and bungalow, situated among some low, bare hills, with stunted tamarisk and dwarf palms growing at the foot of them. Here, too, is a post-office where the post-bag from Quetta to Sistan and *vice versa* is opened, and letters can be posted and received. I was also able to obtain welcome supplies in the way of fowls and eggs from the "munshi" (post-master) in charge, and barley and "atta" for the ponies and men.

From Merui the track lay through much the same sort of country, running at times between low ridges of barren hills and across broad dips having the appearance of long-dried-up river beds, where tamarisk and dwarf palm flourished; at others, over vast plains where vegetation ceased, and nothing was to be seen but huge expanses of black gravel and rock, parched and shimmering in the sun. As we approached Chah Sandan, our next camp, mountains appeared to the north, with jagged, broken outline of naked rock, standing out sharp and clear against the blue of the cloudless sky. At the end of a march of about

twenty-one miles I found a somewhat dilapidated-looking thana by the roadside, in the midst of a level plain of stone and gravel, sparsely covered with stunted tamarisk and other dried-up scrub: not much to look at, and for the most part so burnt and withered as to be ready to fall to dust at a touch, but sufficient seemingly for the camels to graze on.

I was now 276 miles from Quetta, and halted on the 30th to rest the camels. The road, as will have been gathered, is a sufficiently dreary one, and little in the way of human life is to be met with; an occasional kafilah, travelling at slow, monotonous pace towards Quetta, and sometimes a small company of men on camels or on foot, marching in the same direction as myself, the latter pilgrims for the most part, on their way to the holy city of Mashhad. Near Kuchaki Chah I met a kafilah of about thirty camels from Sistan; at Yadgar Chah was a larger kafilah of Pathans, who had come from Herat through Sistan, with loads of dried fruit and other merchandise, and were on their way to Quetta; at Dalbandin there was a dealer with a string of horses, and shortly before reaching Merui I had come across a kafilah of from fifty to sixty camels from Sistan, also travelling east. One feature of every kafilah, and every collection of travellers that I came across, was noticeable,

and that was that a certain number, if not the whole of the party, carried arms of some sort or another—a precaution born of experience in these byways of the East—from rifles to huge scimitar-shaped swords. Frequently men were to be seen carrying guns of the most wonderful and obsolete pattern, and I could not help wondering who, in the event of their having to be discharged, would receive the greater damage—the man at the stock or the man at the muzzle end.

From Chah Sandan to Tratoh, a distance of twenty-four miles, the road lay over a vast plain of black gravel, with a horizon on the south and west like the sea, but broken on the north by rocky hills. I found little to call for remark as I rode along this dreary waste. Vegetation there was none, but here and there curious excrescences of sand caught the eye: low, rounded mounds sometimes in irregular patches, but more often in regular lines, looking from afar like chains of entrenchments stretching across the plain. Beyond this nothing but miles and miles of black gravel, the dreary monotony of which was enhanced by a leaden sky overhead. Camp was pitched near a well of brackish water; and the thana, a rectangular enclosure of the usual mud bricks, divided into two by a wall across the centre, contained a few low and gloomy rooms in one half, the abode of a daffidar and a

few sowars. Close to this enclosure a large circle of huge sacks, arranged in pairs, and the presence of recumbent forms wrapped up in huge "poshtins" (sheep-skin coats), which on closer inspection proved to be sleeping humanity, indicated the presence of a kafilah, and the number of sacks, that it consisted of thirty or forty camels. "Sistanis on their way to Quetta with loads of wool" was the answer to my inquiries.

Rain came on soon after midday, and continued steadily till 10 P.M., when it ceased, leaving a cold, white mist, which hung like a pall over Tratoh, as I left on the morning of the 2nd. It turned out to be quite local, however, and I soon cantered out of it into a clear and cloudless atmosphere beyond. The same level plain lay before me, losing itself in an unbounded horizon to the south, but still broken by low rocky hills on the north. Far away to the south-west a low range of hills became visible, appearing a dull blue grey through the dim haze of distance, while to the right of them rested what I took to be a small white cloud, on the edge of the plain. As we got farther west, however, far from being a fleecy white cloud, it resolved itself into a glittering snow-clad peak, which on inquiry I found to be the Kuh-i-Tuftan, a peak of 12,681 feet, on the Perso-Baluch border. The absence of vegetation

was again noticeable during the day, but at Kundi, twenty-two miles from Tratoh, sand was again in evidence, and the ground was covered with a low scrub growing in tufts, and called by my Baluchis "ktrart." One would imagine from its dusty, burned-up appearance, that it was anything but palatable; but the camels seemed to find it good enough.

There is little that calls for remark on the road from Kundi to Mashki Chah, my next camp. Close to Kundi stunted tamarisk was again to be seen; but this was soon left behind, and the road resumed its monotonous course over plains of stone and gravel. Towards the end of the day's march, it approached a low range of hills, whose gaunt ribs of rock projected through masses of sand, and shortly before reaching camp we were winding about among low hills of sand and gravel at the foot of the range. Mashki Chah consists of a well and thana, and a few palm trees, surrounded by rocky peaks, rising in fantastic shapes from the low range at the foot of which it is situated; and, taking into consideration the nature of the country which encompasses it on every side, one might be forgiven for considering it almost picturesque.

From here the first few miles led over ground broken by low hills and ridges, but before long we were again travelling over a level plain, skirt-

ing a low range of hills on the north. A distance of some miles over the level, with nothing to afford relief to the eye wearied with continual scenes of dreary desolation, brought us again to a maze of low mounds and ridges, among which we twisted and turned till we reached the wells and small mud shelter of Ware Chah.

From local information I gathered that wild asses used to roam over the plains in this neighbourhood, in considerable numbers, but that the advent of the caravan route had driven them away, and they had been rarely seen in the vicinity of late. They were, however, so my informant gave me to understand, still to be found in fair numbers not far from Kirtaka—a post on the route three days' journey farther on—and he knew of two having been shot during the last month.

From Ware Chah the road differed little from the previous march, though leading through a country more uniformly hilly, as it drew towards the Saindak mountains and the Persian border. To the south the twin peaks of the Kuh-i-Tuftan rose sharp and clear, glittering with their mantle of snow in the glare of the midday sun. The corpses of two camels by the wayside, in a state of rapid decomposition, and already but little removed from gaunt, white skeletons, seemed but a fitting adjunct to the dreary and forbid-

ding aspect of the country which forced itself upon our attention for a distance of twenty-three miles, till the thana of Makak Karez, becoming suddenly visible round a corner, proclaimed the day's march at an end. The water-supply here is brought, as the name of the place implies, by means of a "karez" from some hills near by, and it was a relief to find that it was sweet, for at the last four stages it had been very salt.

A ride of eleven miles brought me to Saindak at the foot of the mountains on the Persian border, where I found a well and spacious rectangular courtyard, containing at one end eight or nine rooms, including a post-office. On all sides bare hills rose up in rugged, irregular shapes, streaked with odd seams of colour, from brick red and salmon pink to purple and sombre black.

Both men and beasts were ready for a rest, so I halted here on the 7th. Not far from the thana stood a few huts, the first thing I had seen in the shape of a village on the road since leaving the foot of Sheikh Husain.

The road from Sainduk to Kirtaka—seventeen miles—lay for the first few miles among the hills of a spur projecting from the main range, whence it emerged on to the edge of a vast plain—the skirts of the real desert, which lies to the north-east. Along the fringe of this plain, and skirting

the hills on the west, it ran in a north-westerly direction to Kirtaka, the usual building on the edge of a patch of yellow grass.

From Mohammed Reza Chah, seventeen miles beyond Kirtaka, a vile apology for a road pursued its way along the foot of the hills, from which great furrows ran down to the plain, cutting the track at right angles, and giving it the appearance of an angry sea troubled by a heavy ground-swell more than anything else. Along this we walked and cantered alternately, and at the end of a couple of hours came upon a kafilah of seventy or eighty camels bringing loads of wool and almonds from Mashhad. Another hour of uninterrupted going, and a large white stone became visible standing upright on the plain about 100 yards from the track. At this point three countries meet—Baluchistan, Persia, and Afghanistan—the forbidden lands of his Highness, Habibullah Khan, stretching away to the north-east. A few hundred yards below this, the road left its course along the foot of the mountains, and entered them, winding thence amongst the precipitous cliffs and jagged peaks of the many-coloured Kuh-i-Malik Siah, till it reached Killa Robat on the Perso-Baluch boundary. The thana here was a substantial one and a bungalow, then being built, should very soon be ready for the accommodation of travellers. I found a kafilah, also from Mashhad, carrying

loads similar to the one I had already passed on the road.

Halting a day at Robat, I left for Hurmak on the 12th, by a road taking a fairly level course through the Kuh-i-Malik Siah, keeping just on the Persian side of the boundary, and running now due north. Occasionally glimpses of the real desert to the east could be seen through openings in the hills, but otherwise there was little of interest, and an uneventful march of seventeen miles brought us to camp, pitched on the edge of a large patch of tamarisk jungle, and close to some springs of excellent water. From Hurmak the road took us down a dried-up river bed, and emerging from the mountains, led over a huge stony plain with an unbounded horizon on the north and east. Some miles of sand took the place of stone, and stunted tamarisk sprang up all round. At one place we came to a fair-sized stretch of water, but beyond this there was nothing to mark time or distance, and we reached camp at Nawad Chah after a march of about twenty-four miles. This is a new well, dug within the last few weeks, to shorten the long march to Girdi Thana, and a small domed mud house had also been erected.

Girdi Thana is not far from Nawad Chah, probably not more than six or seven miles, and the road, or rather track, connecting them lies over an absolute level, covered plentifully with

tamarisk. From here, dotted all over the plain, are to be seen the remains of ancient cities, all deserted and fallen into decay. I visited one within a couple of miles of camp, and found walls and the lower parts of houses standing, but the whole had the appearance of having been long deserted, owing to the domes having all fallen in, and to drifts of sand having been blown against the walls. From the latter I could see with my glasses any number of similar ruins, dotted over the plain in every direction, some of which have, I believe, been deserted for many years. My escort told me that the villages all round had been deserted for over 200 years; but though some have undoubtedly been deserted as long or longer, I have good reason to believe that the majority were left by the inhabitants owing to changes in the course of the Helmand depriving them of their water-supply about thirty-five years ago. The early history of many must date back for centuries, for coins and seals of Greek and Assyrian times are dug up by the natives, and legend credits them with being the birthplace of Rustam, greatest hero of Persian myth.

From Girdi Thana to Asak Chah, a march of twenty-two miles, the track lies over the same interminable plain, with an unbounded horizon on all sides, except where the thin line of the

Kuh-i-Malik Siah is still visible to the south. As we got farther, vegetation became thinner and scarcer, till at times we were traversing huge wastes of soil, hard and smooth as asphalt, which extended as far as the eye could see in every direction. About fifteen miles on we came to a large deserted village, in a state of fair preservation, called Hauzdar. Some of the upper storeys of the houses were still standing, and from one of these I obtained a view over the whole village, a mass of broken-down and decaying domes and walls. The outside walls were intact, and still in a state of sufficient preservation to prevent any one walking into the city except by the single gate. All round in every direction could be seen similar remains, and Hauzdar must in days gone by have been a place of considerable size and importance. At Asak Chah I met a number of nomad shepherds with large flocks of sheep, sign that I was on the fringe of a more inhabitable country.

Leaving camp at 9 A.M. the next morning, we made for some low hills which rose from the plain, and a few miles on I was met by Sirdar Sayed Khan, a Baluch chief of the neighbourhood, with a following of about a dozen mounted men, and also by two sowars of Jacob's Horse, sent out by Major Trench to escort me. After the usual exchange of compliments, we rode on

to Sayed Khan's Khel (village), about ten miles from Asak Chah, where I found my tents pitched, and shortly afterwards the chief paid me a visit in my tent.

The Amir of Sistan had sent out his mules to help me over the last twenty miles that lay between myself and his capital, a kindness which I greatly appreciated when I saw what sort of a road it was that led up to the chief town in Sistan, and still more when I learned that his own private mules were the only ones in the country. The whole face of the country changed these last twenty miles: instead of a dry, waterless plain, it became a plain intersected with ditches and canals, covered with low scrub jungle, and with pools of water, making travelling anything but pleasant—for, with the exception of one or two lately made by Trench, the recently appointed British Consul for Sistan, there were no bridges, and the canals being often deep, wettings were unpleasantly frequent. Villages were dotted about over the plain, differing little from the ruined specimens I had already seen, except that they were inhabited.

A few miles out from Nasratabad, Trench met me, escorted by two sowars of Jacob's Horse, carrying a small Union Jack on a lance. A little farther on the low houses of a mud town became visible on the horizon, and in a short time we

were winding in and out through tortuous and narrow lanes, between the small and irregularly built houses of Husainabad, the southern portion of the capital. From narrow alleys we emerged on to a graveyard unenclosed in any way, and spread out like a carpet in front of the Russian Vice-Consul's house. Before us rose the walls of Nasratabad, the northern city, and to the east stretched the unbounded plain. Here, a few hundred yards from the town, under the shadow of the Union Jack, flying from a thirty-foot flagstaff, was to be seen a neatly laid out settlement, the home of the English Consul and his staff. My journey for the time being was at an end, and I looked forward with pleasure to a rest in Sistan, ready to appreciate to the full the companionship of a fellow-countryman and the comforts and luxuries of a fixed abode, after many days of solitary marching over the stony wastes of inhospitable Baluchistan.

I have endeavoured to show that the journey from Quetta can, thanks to the admirable way in which Captain Webb-Ware, the officer in charge of the route, has carried out his duties, be performed with ease and comparative comfort, that supplies are forthcoming at all the larger posts, and that water and grazing exist for camels at every stage. The climate is in the winter as a rule fine and dry, cold at nights

and in the early mornings, with a warm sun in the middle of the day, and it is in winter that caravans at present travel over it; but I am assured by those who ought to know, that though the heat in the daytime is very considerable, there is no reason why caravans (who prefer travelling by night when feasible) should not find the route in every respect as satisfactory a one in summer as in winter. The total rainfall is very small, and for some years has not averaged more than a few inches, which makes cultivation impossible except in selected spots in the vicinity of the mountains, where artificial irrigation is possible by means of "karezes"; and it is for this reason that the country over which the route passes has the appearance of a deserted and uninhabited waste, such villages as there are being situated at the foot of the mountains and as far removed as possible from the dead stretches of unproductive plain. As far as Dalbandin there should be no difficulty about supplies, even when the traffic becomes far greater than it is at present, as local cultivation should be possible for this section; but from Dalbandin to Saindak cultivation would hardly be possible, and supplies will have to be brought from Nushki and the Nushki-Dalbandin section, and for the latter half of this section

from Mirjawar and the country round it on the Persian border, where I was told there was cultivation and cultivatable land in plenty. With so fertile a country as Sistan within a few days' journey, no anxiety need be felt on account of supplies for the remainder of the journey.

CHAPTER VII.

SISTAN AND KHURASAN.

(Continuation of a Paper read before the Scottish Geographical Society, 6th February 1902.)

HAVING reached, after many days of marching across such arid wastes as I have described, the capital of little-known Sistan, one's first impression is that there is little to see and still less to rouse one's interest in the tumble-down, dilapidated mud city, which has the appearance of having been dropped down haphazard in the middle of a vast and cheerless plain. The entire absence of roads, the untidy and neglected appearance of Husainabad, the southern town through which one rides on entering the capital from the south, the narrow winding lanes which serve for streets, and the total want of method displayed in the arrangement of the low-domed houses, which stand together in irregular clumps, all tend to produce a feeling of disappointment on one's first glimpse of the capital.

The present capital and seat of what the Persians are pleased to call the government consists of two towns, or rather of a town divided into two parts—the southern half known locally as Husainabad, and the northern, which is entirely surrounded by high city walls, and known as Nasratabad. Beyond these two towns have sprung up in the last few months the neat buildings of the British Consulate, which may be said to constitute a third part of the capital, and which I heard talked of on all sides as Trenchabad—*i.e.*, the city of Trench. Husainabad, as I have already mentioned, is little more than a collection of small domed mud houses, built irrespective of ground-plan, wheresoever fancy dictated, in the middle of a vast plain. Here and there a windmill of curious shape stands up conspicuous among the surrounding houses, usually stationary in the winter months, but wanting only the fierce blasts of the "Bad-o-sad-i-bist roz," or wind of a hundred and twenty days, which blows unceasingly throughout the summer months, to rouse it to a state of wild activity. Beyond this the houses of the Russian Vice-Consul and the head Mullah are the only other objects likely to attract one's attention.

Nasratabad, the northern town, though little to boast of, is by far the more imposing of the two, being enclosed by high walls, about 350

yards in length from north to south and 400 yards from east to west, with buttresses at intervals of about 40 yards. An additional rectangular enclosure, projecting from the north-east corner, contains the arc or citadel, in which is situated the palace of the Amir. In the centre of the southern wall stands one of the two gateways of the city, supported on each side by a buttress, and from here the central street runs the length of the city, terminating in a similar gateway in the centre of the north wall.

With a single exception, the houses and shops on either side of the street are small and insignificant, the latter hardly recognisable as such, owing to their apparent innocence of goods for sale; while the owner is content to sit in front of his door, in a state of apathetic indolence, typical of all things great and small, from the highest to the lowest, throughout the dominions of his Highness Muzaffar-ad-Din Shah.

The exception to which I have referred is a commodious and well-built shop, midway between the south and north gates of the city, where goods of European manufacture of all sorts and kinds, included under the general heading of fancy goods, are sold by an individual who, as far as this branch of his business at any rate is concerned, corresponds to the general dealer of the West. The owner of this establishment

is one Seth Suleiman, an Indian merchant who left Quetta at the end of 1899 with a capital of 20,000 rupees to exploit the trade of Sistan; a venture which had already met with considerable success, and at the time of my visit he was making a very large profit on his capital, which he informed me was not nearly large enough to admit of his carrying on the trade of which the place was capable.

In addition to Nasratabad and Husainabad, there remains the more modern part of the town, which I have already spoken of as Trenchabad. Separated from the rest of the city by a "maidan" (stretch of level ground) of some acres, it occupies an admirable site, and has the advantage of room for extension, should it at any time be thought advisable to embark upon enlargement.

Between two rows of buildings is a wide space more nearly a square than a street, at one end of which flies the Union Jack from a flagstaff planted in a solidly built pedestal of mud. Behind the main block of buildings on the south side of the square are one or two other buildings, the most interesting of which is a mosque, if only from the fact of its having been built by an Englishman. The main buildings cover a space of about 150 yards by 70 yards, the whole site consisting roughly of about thirteen acres,

and when it is considered that the whole of the buildings, including the Consul's house, guard-room, cavalry lines, staff and servants' quarters, mosque and all, were completed for a sum of 2500 rupees (£166), Trenchabad may probably claim to be the cheapest town on record.

Such was the city I found in December 1900, which in the space of twelve months had been roused from the state of torpor of a true house of the Orient, untouched by the influence of Western progress, where time stands still and change is unknown, to the surprising fact that there were worlds beyond its own and people of an alien race who had stirred them, vastly to their own amazement, to a state of—to their ideas—extraordinary activity.

The day after my arrival I called on M. Miller, the Russian Vice-Consul, whom I found most cordial and agreeable, speaking English exceedingly well, and, as I afterwards found out, a fluent master of the language of the country, an acquirement of the greatest importance to any one entertaining hopes of dealing successfully with the Persian. Later in the afternoon I paid a visit in state to the Amir, who rejoices in the title of Hashmat-ul-Mulk, or glory of the country, and the spectacle of the British Consul and myself, the former in full uniform, while I had donned black frock-coat and patent leather

boots, riding solemnly through the narrow alleys of the crumbling mud city, accompanied by a full escort of Pathan sowars, must have been well calculated to inspire laughter had any one capable of appreciating the humour of the situation been present to witness it.

Having entered a walled enclosure in front of the Amir's palace, where were to be seen prisoners bent and groaning under chains and irons of the most appalling size and weight, and having acknowledged the salute of a ragged-looking cut-throat with a gun, presumably one of the much-talked-of army, on sentry duty, we dismounted and were forthwith ushered into the presence of the governor. The reception-hall was large for Sistan, and might have been 18 or 20 feet in length by perhaps 10 or 12 in breadth, with a recess in one side containing a fireplace, in front of which were placed a table and three or four chairs. The only ornamentation on the mud walls was a dado of cretonne, and on the table was a cloth of bright yellow cotton, with a deep border of gaudy red roses. Overhead could be seen the funnel of a "badgir," or air shaft, for catching the wind in the hot weather.

On entering, the Amir, a pleasant-looking man of medium height, with black beard and moustache, rose to meet us, and having welcomed us

with courtly bow and stately handshake, motioned us to seats on either side of the table, and with the greatest solemnity and deliberation then took a seat between us. Pausing a moment—a Persian is never in a hurry—to be sure that we were seated, he made the polite inquiry never omitted, asking if we were well; and answers having been given, and similar demands for information as to the state of health of the ruler having been made, preliminaries were at an end, and we were at liberty to talk on any subject that might suggest itself.

Owing to my inability to speak the language, the brunt of the conversation devolved upon Trench, and was for the most part confined to generalities. The Amir spoke of Teheran and Mashhad, both of which places he had visited, and was quite familiar with the idea of railways and similar innovations of civilisation; and though his knowledge of such subjects rested on the single example of a line the country can boast of, the light railway from Teheran to the mosque of Shah Abdul Azim, a distance of a few miles only, he spoke with assurance of the advantage of a line from Quetta to Robat, which he looked upon as a certain production of the near future: indeed I heard the advent of a line along the new trade route discussed with much more certainty by the higher-class Sistanis,

who look upon the question of its ultimate construction as in no way open to doubt, than I did at the Quetta-Nushki end of the route.

Meeting him casually like this, one receives the impression of a quiet, dignified, gentlemanly man, content to live quietly as the ruler of his province, and desiring only to be left in peace and quiet. Though ostensibly an Anglophile, he is shrewd enough where his own interests are concerned, and stands in wholesome awe of his superior at Mashhad, who, as he well knows, is under the sinister influence of Russia. So that though willing to assist British interests as far as he considers compatible with his own safety, he could hardly be relied on to take any very active part in the furtherance of British trade and prestige, as long as there is a possibility of its being reported against him at Mashhad through the agency of the Russian Vice-Consul, his policy being strongly flavoured with a desire to please both parties; and he may be looked upon as a friend and ally in so much as he will continue to show such signs of friendship towards Great Britain as will not endanger his own position.

Having made the acquaintance of the Amir, I now turned my attention to the two people of next importance, Mir Mausum Khan, the Sartip, and Mohammed Reza Khan, the Sarhang, both

sons of the ruler; and the same farcical procession that had proceeded to the Amir was again on view. The house in which the Sartip was living is situated in the only garden of the place, a few hundred yards to the north of Nasratabad, while the Sarhang had a house within the walls of the city. As I visited them both the same afternoon, I was afforded an opportunity of comparing the two candidates for the future possession of the sceptre in Sistan, a comparison which I am bound to say was more than favourable to the Sartip. Both are of the same age, twenty-one according to the Sarhang (December 1900); but the difference between the two could hardly fail to strike the most casual observer. On visiting the Sartip, I was received by a quiet, gentlemanly man with perfect manners, and, when he talked, seldom without a pleasant smile, despite a distressing disease of the eyes from which I was sorry to see he suffered. In strong contrast was the loud-voiced welcome accorded me by his more flashy brother, who had, I fear, imbibed a good deal more spirit than was good for him, and talked and laughed uproariously throughout the interview.

The Sartip received us in a room which, like the Amir's hall of audience, was without ornament,—a few chairs, a table, and divan making the sum-total of the furniture. I could not

help smiling when I noticed a large white bath-towel of European manufacture neatly spread over the table in place of a table-cloth. At the time of my visit he was very full of a proposed journey to India by the Nushki route, with a view to consulting a first-class oculist about his eyes, and as I had just travelled along the road, this subject naturally formed the chief topic of conversation. From the eagerness with which he questioned me, and the interest he took in my answers, I judged that he was very anxious to get started, and a good deal excited at the idea of crossing the gulf between Persia and India and of seeing for himself the wonders of the great empire that lay beyond.

There is very little doubt that the Sartip is a man of far stronger character than either his father or his brother; and it is equally certain that as far as Sistan is concerned he is the man of the future, provided always that the developments of the future, in which alien powers must play a predominant part, will admit of a native of the country occupying a position of anything more than a puppet. Public opinion, at any rate, holds no two thoughts as to who will wield the sceptre in the future, and from what I heard and from the little I saw of him during my stay in Sistan, I am inclined to think that he will make a strong and powerful ruler. Even at

this present time his influence is very great, especially through his mother—a Baluch lady of very high family—among the hordes of Baluchis who cover the country from Sistan to Herat.

I have mentioned the boisterous manner of the Sarhang, whom I found to be a very coarse edition of his brother. He ushered us into his room with no very steady step, and having indicated by a lordly sweep of his hand the chairs he desired us to occupy, plumped down on to a third with such clumsy violence that the article not altogether unnaturally gave way. In no way abashed he threw the broken chair aside, and with a remark which was presumably of a jocose nature, judging from the uproarious laughter with which he followed it, succeeded in seating himself in another. The fittings and ornamentation of the room afforded evidence of the extravagant and uncultured taste of the man, every niche and corner displaying an incongruous jumble of vulgar trash. As may be imagined, there was not a great deal to be gathered from his conversation, and beyond eliciting the fact that he had been struck by the advantage of well-built houses since he had witnessed the success of Europeans in this line, and had become an enthusiastic builder himself, and that he was also interested in gardening, I gained nothing but an impression of a shallow and extravagant man, who placed his own whims

and pleasures first and all else nowhere. In extenuation, I must admit that when he returned my visit a few days later, in a condition of sobriety, he presented a much better appearance, and talked much more quietly and sensibly; but at the best he is not to be compared with his brother, whose temperate life and habits and strength of character are as striking as are the intemperance and weakness of the Sarhang.

For the rest, there are few men in Sistan who can be looked upon as likely to make any name in history. The two chief Sirdars are Sirdar Purdil Khan and Mir Abbas, the first of whom played a more or less prominent part in local history a few years ago. From all accounts he is a man of fine physique and of a bold, independent spirit, as his name, signifying lion-hearted, suggests, and I can well believe that he is a man to command respect among his own people, if he at all resembles his son, whom I had the pleasure of meeting. In Mir Abbas one sees a picture of good-natured content in the disguise of a country squire, who asks no more than to spend the days of an unambitious life, surrounded by the grandchildren of a somewhat prolific family, in the peace and quiet of his own domain.

In addition to these permanent inhabitants, there were one or two visitors, all making a more or less prolonged sojourn in the land, carry-

ing on their business, when they had any, with that contemptuous disregard for time which is so noticeable a characteristic of Persian methods. One gentleman, who was on his way round the country in the capacity of official herald of the safe return of the Shah from his trip to Europe, had already occupied six weeks in making known the glad news in Sistan, during which time he was the recipient of presents and hospitality at the expense of the province, as being an emissary from headquarters, and as long as such hospitality continued to be on a sufficiently magnificent scale to satisfy him he would no doubt remain, only passing on with his news when he found there was little more to be gained by stopping where he was. News carried by such a messenger must become a little stale before being conveyed to all for whom it is intended.

If I found no difficulty in getting to Sistan, I found that getting away again was quite a different matter. The only form of transport in the country was camels, the few mules there are being the private property of the Amir, and the only camel man who was willing to proceed in a northern direction was a sulky and vacillating Birjandi, who could in no wise understand why the "feringhi" should be in such a break-neck hurry, the passing of time being an unconsidered quantity in his Oriental conception of life. I

had calculated on sending off my camp on the 1st, and following myself on the 2nd; but so many difficulties had to be overcome that the final start was not made till the 13th.

A sharp frost had dried the ground and covered all the pools and puddles with ice, leaving a keen bite in the air as I jogged along westward under a cloudless sky. Away over the Hamun and Naizar, clouds of duck and wildfowl were to be seen flying in all directions, testifying to the numbers that exist on this vast expanse of water. Once past the Hamun, we got out of the rich alluvial soil of Sistan, and made our way over huge, bare plains of gravel. In front of us lay a low ridge of barren hills, and farther away to the south-west stretched a line of snowy mountains, glittering in the morning sun. We had been going for about three hours when my horse went suddenly dead lame, and became so bad that I was forced to get off and walk, no very great hardship, however, on a bright winter's day, and leaving Ralmat Khan to bring him along, I stepped out, and an hour and a half later reached camp, pitched by a small stream, a few miles from the foot of the hills in front of us. Though the water of the stream looked clear and good, I very soon discovered that it was extremely bitter, and during my stay here the nauseating taste of salt water permeated all my food.

Night was again very cold, and clouds began to gather on the horizon as I left camp on the morning of the 15th. A short distance over the same stony plain brought us to the foot of the hills, which we entered by a defile between high walls of rock. At the mouth of this passage through the hills was a grove of palm-trees, with a small village standing on the edge of it, from which the inhabitants flocked to gape at the strange spectacle of a white man riding through their midst. As we rode on over a level stretch of cultivated soil between ridges of rocky hills, more signs of habitation became apparent, and small collections of houses enclosed by high mud walls, little clumps of trees, quaint-looking windmills, and tiny patches of young green barley, all went to show that we were over the desolate and uninhabited stretches on the north-west border of Sistan, and were once more in a country possessed of a sprinkling, at any rate, of inhabited and cultivated oases.

I was entirely in my camel men's hands as far as time and direction were concerned, and from here they went across country, leaving the main caravan route which passes through Neh, and which I did not again strike till within four marches of Birjand, and camping whenever they considered that they had marched far enough. My progress, consequently, through an intensely

dull and uninteresting country, was far from rapid.

On the 16th we marched over a level stretch at first of good soil, and then of stony ground, while all round barren hills rose in isolated groups and ridges from the plain. Towards the end of the day's march on the 17th we got into more mountainous country, where here and there hills higher than the rest were lightly flaked with snow, affording some little relief to the dreary dust-colour of the whole landscape. As I was leaving camp on the 18th, two Baluchi sowars rode up, on their way with the mail-bag to Birjand, carrying also some letters for me forwarded from Nasratabad. We rode along together for some way, over the usual monotonous stretches of gravel, earth, and rock, till we came upon the tents pitched in the very middle of a cheerless plain. Though not so cold as it had been of late, heavy clouds hung threateningly all round, and the outlook was indescribably dull and dreary. On the 19th we made better progress, getting over about thirty miles during the day, through country much the same as usual, though the plain was covered for the greater part of the way with large, leafless bushes, grey, dried-up, and dead-looking. Towards the end of the march we skirted along the edge of a large swamp, surrounded by great patches of glistening salt, to the east of which rose a bare

mountain-range of burnt sienna, smudged here and there with odd patches of brick red.

Near the head of the plain along which we were travelling we came upon some acres of cultivated land, and a village of perhaps 150 small domed houses, massed closely together, the inmates of which crowded to their roofs to stare at us. Our road took us along the "karez" or "kanat" which brought water from the mountains at the head of the plain. Parallel to, and within a few yards of, the one in working order were the shafts of an old and disused one, the people preferring, it would seem, to construct an entirely new kanat to repairing an existing one which happens to have got blocked, though where the economy in making an entirely new aqueduct in place of repairing an old one comes in is not altogether obvious.

We now crossed the hills at the head of the plain, passing a kafilah of forty camels *en route* for Sistan, which showed that we had once more joined the regular caravan route, and, entering an elevated valley which boasted of a certain amount of cultivation, camped at the second of two villages which we came to. The people were inquisitive and curious, and gathered in crowds round my tent.

On the 21st we continued for some way along the valley, bordered on the west by a fine range of

mountains deep in snow, and then ascended by a steep pass to higher ground, where snow lay to a depth of six or eight inches. For the rest of the day we were winding about among hills and in snow the whole time, till we reached a sheltered hollow in which were situated a couple of villages, where we camped.

The 22nd was a miserable day: a thick white mist shrouded all the hills, heavy clouds hung low in the sky, while a biting wind blew in fitful squalls, adding to the feeling of discomfort already produced by the cold raw air. The camel men had refused to take my advance camp on overnight, and though they had started with daylight I soon overtook them, and at one o'clock reached Mud, a large village on the edge of the snow. In addition to the village itself, which covered a considerable area, there was also a large walled enclosure or citadel, a little apart from the rest.

Next day I reached Bujd, a village inhabited by Sunni Mohammedans, and the day after entered the capital, Birjand, a large mud town, shortly after midday.

Owing to the uneven nature of the ground on which the town is built, one sees but a small portion of it from the plain over which one rides when approaching from the east, and it is not until one has climbed one of the many low, irregularly-shaped hills which surround it, and looked

down on it from above, that one can claim to have seen the city in its entirety. From such a point of vantage one sees spread out before one a stretch of hilly ground thickly covered with a mass of irregular domed houses, with here and there an edifice larger than the rest, standing out conspicuous with upper storey and bald flat roof, usually the residence of some servant or retainer of the Amir. At the south-east corner stands the old fort, the usual high mud walls enclosing a few houses and a fine mosque and courtyard, built and completed by the present ruler about five years ago, by far the finest building I saw in Birjand, which has little to boast of in the way of architectural beauty. Through the northern part of the town a broad thoroughfare runs crescent-wise from east to west, dominated at its western extremity by the new fort, an erection standing on the summit of a low hill. It is known as the "new fort," but would appear to have very little valid claim to either title, consisting as it does at the present time of decayed mud walls enclosing the remains of what might once have been houses. I was struck with the spectacle of such a fine broad thoroughfare in a town which for the rest boasted of nothing but narrow lanes and winding alleys, often mere tunnels beneath a conglomerated mass of buildings; but the result of inquiry showed that it was no fault of the people that they were

possessed of so spacious a street, as it was in reality the bed of a stream which in the wet season returned to its original office of waterway. On each side of it stood lines of small shops, and on the northern side was an imposing caravanserai, quite recently completed.

From conversation with various people I gathered that Birjand was a great trading centre, and that besides one large and several smaller madressehs and schools, there were six or seven large serais for the accommodation of the kafilahs which were always coming and going. The population was generally agreed to be about 30,000, which points to the increased prosperity of the town of late years, for in 1890 it is spoken of as a town of about 14,000 inhabitants, while Colonel Yate, when visiting the place in 1894, put down the population at 25,000. The chief water-supply is brought from the hills by karez; but this is hard and brackish, and for drinking purposes rain water is caught and preserved in large tanks. Among other institutions which I noticed were public baths, and not far from my house stood one of these unwholesome-looking dungeons. The appearance of the exterior, however, deterred me from inquiring personally into the system and management obtaining in the interior, though as I witnessed steam escaping

from chinks in the mud roof, which was little above the level of the ground, I conclude that it is something akin to a Turkish bath.

Starting on 4th February, after leaving the straggling houses on the outskirts of the town behind, we travelled in a northern direction over a flat expanse bounded by a range of mountains from which long lines of kanat shafts, looking for all the world like the tops of miniature volcanic craters, stretched away in various directions, carrying water to the villages which were dotted here and there over the country. Much of the land was being ploughed—the plough, a rough implement of wood, being drawn by a cow and donkey harnessed side by side, a quaint though apparently satisfactory combination; and it is possible that there are times of the year when the terrible monotony of the uniform dust-colour of Birjand is broken by fields of smiling corn and the blossom of the many kinds of fruit said to grow there.

On the 5th we crossed the range in front of us by the Saman Shahi pass (7000 feet), where snow lay deep on the ground, at the top of which I was afforded ample opportunity of ruminating on the natural disadvantages of the ungainly build of the camel, which renders all ground, with the exception of a perfectly level and dry plain, so peculiarly unsuitable to his

movements, while I looked on helplessly at the clumsy efforts of my transport animals as they slid and slithered about on the slippery surface, halting every few yards to gaze round with the aggravating expression of injured innocence, with which one becomes so familiar, only to flounder on again with a protesting gurgle to the vociferous exhortations of the drivers.

Having wasted the greater part of the morning in seeing them safely over the worst places, I went on ahead down a gradual descent, passing here and there a small village in a sheltered hollow, and little patches of cultivated land often enclosed by mud walls. Evening began to close in, bringing with it no signs of Rum, a village at which I purposed camping for the night; and thinking I must surely be somewhere near my destination, I took the first opportunity afforded by a small cluster of domed huts of inquiring how far it was. In reply I was informed that at present it was twelve miles, but that if I continued in my present direction, it would soon be a good deal farther. This was a little disconcerting, as I had followed the only visible track; but none the less, further questioning elicited the fact that we were off the road to Mashhad, and should have to go several miles before we could get on to it again.

Following the direction indicated by our informant, we were lucky enough to strike a fair-sized village called Sadik at seven o'clock, where as luck would have it there was a good caravanserai, about seven miles from Rum. What had become of the camels goodness only knew, as nothing had been heard of them in the village, and by ten o'clock I gave up all hope of seeing them before day, and having dined off some native bread obtained in the village, I got hold of some straw, and lay down to sleep as I was, on the floor of one of the untenanted rooms of the caravanserai. It was bitterly cold, and what with having had scarcely anything to eat, and being entirely without blankets, I did not pass a very enjoyable night.

Next morning I sent out men to search for the camels, while I got on to the roof of the serai and scoured the country with field-glasses. About midday they hove in sight, and half an hour later reached Sadik. It seemed that they had also lost their way, and had been aimlessly wandering over the plain, a fact which will give some idea of the nature of a Persian road. As soon as they reached Sadik, I went on, getting over the remaining distance between us and Rum by evening.

The next place of any importance to be reached was Kain. Judging from what I saw, I should

say that a great deal of fruit must be grown here, for I marched for nearly two miles among orchards and cultivated fields enclosed by mud walls before coming to any sign of houses. When I at length came to the town itself, I found a solid-looking gateway barring entrance to the main street, supported on each side by a tower, the whole of which would seem to be a little superfluous since the place was without walls. After proceeding through the usual alleys of a Persian town, we reached the caravanserai, a moderate example of the article, and I set to work to clean out the hovel in which I purposed passing the night.

The town had the appearance of a large village surrounded by trees, with one large building standing up high above the rest of the houses, which I was informed was a mosque. The population is, I was given to understand, about 1000; but the only fact of any interest that I gleaned about the place was, that it is famous as a great place for growing saffron, a valuable export, which has taken the place of the silk for which it used to be noted.

By evening the day following we reached the village of Asadabad, where we spent the night. The next day our road lay over a dreary, shora-covered plain, where all sense of distance was annihilated; and though Dasht-i-Piaz, the village

we were making for, built on the slope leading up to a range of hills at the end of the plain, appeared quite close at midday, it continued to do so in a tantalising and aggravating way, while I tramped along steadily for another four hours before reaching it.

A peculiarity I noticed of the people of Dasht-i-Piaz and other villages in this neighbourhood was the fashion in head-dresses, which took the form of huge sheepskin hats in place of the more usual "paggree."

Leaving Dasht-i-Piaz at 8.30, we went up a gradual ascent into the mountains in front of us until one o'clock, when we came to a sudden and very steep descent down a defile between precipitous, and in many places snow-covered, mountains. The camels having been got safely down to more level ground, we followed a dry river-bed which pursued a winding course along the bottom of a tortuous ravine, and at 3 P.M. reached another steep pass over a ridge of hills. The camels were, however, able to avoid this by taking a rather longer road, and I left them to follow the level, crossing the hills myself.

From the top of the ridge Kakh was visible almost immediately below us, its houses nestling among clumps of trees at the foot of the mountain. Immediately opposite the serai was a large building surmounted by a fine dome of enamelled

bricks in yellow and light and dark blue, which I was informed was the tomb of Sultan Mohammed, younger brother of Iman Reza, the saint whose remains invest Mashhad with such a degree of sanctity, and of course a resort of pilgrimage. As I passed it on entering the serai, several devout worshippers were prostrating themselves to the ground before the holy threshold. Beyond this there was a high-walled enclosure, presumably the fort, in the usual state of decay, and several mosques, as befitted so holy a place of pilgrimage.

I left Kakh on the 12th, getting all the camels loaded and ready to start by 8.30 A.M., and journeyed over a level plain away from the snow-covered mountains above the town. The march to Gunabad, though supposed to be four "farsakhs"—a "farsakh" is an elastic term indicating a distance of from three to five miles according to the part of the country one happens to be in—was certainly a good deal less, and we reached the serai on the edge of the town by 3 P.M.

After leaving Gunabad we passed during the first two or three hours through a large and smiling oasis of well-kept fields, many already green with the young shoots of corn, and flourishing villages, a pleasant change after the usual tracts of barrenness; but having left these behind, we emerged once more on to brown,

uncultivated plain, reaching the village of Amrani by evening.

Between Amrani and the next inhabited country stretched a sterile and inhospitable plain for a distance of eight farsakhs, and as my camels seldom succeeded in covering more than four, or at most five, farsakhs during the day, I found it necessary to carry water, firewood, fodder, &c., from Amrani, so that I should be able to halt for the night at an empty building which was said to exist half-way.

The landscape was one such as is common in Baluchistan and Khurasan, a vast expanse of level with a vision of hills in the dim distance beyond. Overhead the sun shone from a cloudless sky; but during the morning a strong wind blew in fitful gusts, raising a whole host of sand-devils, that spun in wild gyrations over the dreary waste. Mirage, too, dazzling the eye and bewildering the senses with its elusive and incessant tremor, produced for our edification some of its most fantastic illusions, a weird sample displaying a flock of sheep floating gently about in the air with a filmy blue vapour beneath them. During the day I passed a caravan of about forty donkeys, and noticed on one or two occasions shepherds driving their sheep and goats over the plain to pick up what nourishment they could from the dry and dusty scrub that grew there. By 5 P.M.

we reached the building, a large, empty barn, obviously devoted as much to animals as to men. A small party of Hazara pilgrims also spent the night here. I had met one or two of these pilgrims before, tramping wearily along to Mashhad, and I am bound to say I could not help being struck with their implicit trust in Providence. One man I call to mind accosted me on the road before I reached Sistan, begging for a meal and a little money. Six weeks later I met the same individual close to Birjand, still tramping lightheartedly along with not so much as a coin in his pocket, his worldly goods consisting of a rug, which he carried on his back. He was entirely dependent on the hospitality of the villagers he met for mere existence, yet it never so much as entered his head that he might never reach the holy city.

The following day we crossed the remainder of the plain, reaching a village called Khairabad, at the foot of hilly ground, and next day reached Turbat-i-Haidari. Thence a toilsome journey of 70 or 80 miles over mountain-ridges covered with ice and snow took me to the holy city of Mashhad, the end of my caravan journey.

The whole of my journey from Sistan to Mashhad may be summed up as a wearisome struggle, across flat and inconceivably monotonous plains, alternated by jagged lines of hills, becoming

higher and more obstructive as one gets farther north, which seem to have been stretched across this part of Persia from east to west with the express purpose of hindering any one who may be endeavouring to traverse the country. At times in the valleys at the foot of mountain-ridges one encounters considerable tracts of cultivated land; but the predominant impression left upon the mind is of a thirsty and waterless land robed in an eternal garb of drab, and as I traversed these wastes and pondered on the fact that I was travelling through the *rich* province of Khurasan, I often wondered if the trade of such a country could ever show results worthy of any very great commercial undertaking.

It is, indeed, only when one comes to understand how fierce is the craving of Russia for an outlet in warm water from the grim spaces of her land-girt and ice-bound Empire, that the marked attentions paid to Persia by two such powerful suitors as Great Britain and Russia become even remotely comprehensible.

CHAPTER VIII.

NOTES ON A JOURNEY ACROSS ASIA.

(*A Paper read before the Central Asian Society, December* 14, 1904.)

RATHER more than two years ago I had the honour of reading a paper before this Society on a journey which I made over the then newly-opened trade route between India and Persia, across the arid reaches of Baluchistan. Since that time I have had opportunities of renewing my acquaintance with the countries and the peoples of the East, and have carried out a journey which has taken me the whole length of Asia from Constantinople to Peking; and falling in with a suggestion that has been made to me, I have selected for the purpose of this paper a few points which loomed large in the political panorama which unrolled itself before me, more with a view to exciting discussion upon topics that are of interest to the members of this Society than in any false hope of materially

adding to their existing knowledge of Asian affairs.

First, then, since my journey led me across the steppes of Mesopotamia to Baghdad, a word as to the prospects, more especially in connection with railway development, of the Asiatic dominions of the Sultan. This subject has already been dealt with at some length by Colonel Picot in the admirable paper read by him before the members of this Society, entitled "Railways in Western Asia," and there is no occasion, therefore, for me to lay before you any detailed review of the project generally spoken of as the Baghdad Railway scheme. There are, however, one or two points in connection with it which seem to me to be worthy of special consideration and discussion. With the general conclusions drawn by Colonel Picot I heartily agree—that when the prospects of the consummation of the enterprise are nearer realisation than they are at the present time, this country should be in a position to exercise a dominating voice in its control. And I would lay stress upon the reasons which, in my opinion, render such a contingency necessary. I have been accused—wrongly, if I may say so—of lightly putting aside that section of public opinion which is avowedly—and I may add rightly—suspicious of the designs and objects of German world

policy, and which for this reason sees insuperable objections to our having anything to do with any scheme with which that country is concerned. But it is for this very reason—namely, that I should view with dismay Germany or any other great Continental Power exercising the dominating influence in that part of the Near East which stretches from Constantinople to the Persian Gulf which the sole ownership of such a railway would inevitably confer upon them—that I advocate the participation of this country, upon certain conditions, in the Baghdad Railway scheme. As far as our co-operation is concerned, I would lay it down that equal powers of construction, management, and control should be the *minimum* in the way of concession that Great Britain should accept, and I admit that I should far prefer to see, as I have elsewhere advocated, an ultimate solution of the question which would display this country in possession of the section from Baghdad to the Persian Gulf. Under such circumstances "the German road," to quote so high an authority as Captain Mahan, "would find its terminus in a British system, a not unusual international relation."

I am one of those who are of opinion that it cannot be too often or too strongly urged that—to make use of the language of Captain Mahan

once again — "purely naval control is a very imperfect instrument unless supported and reinforced by the shores on which it acts," and that just as we believe it to be imperative that we should not abandon our rights and our position of ascendancy in the southern provinces of Persia, so it is equally important that that portion of the dominions of the Sultan which lies between Baghdad and Koweit should be preserved free from the control of a great Continental Power. Even if we admit — and there are those in this country who do admit it — that the strategic line of our communications with India, Australia, and the Far East will lie in the future by the Cape of Good Hope rather than through the Mediterranean, the vital importance of the Persian Gulf remains unaltered. For although under such altered conditions the capital of the Ottoman Empire would to some extent cease to be a source of danger as providing a base for a flank attack, that portion of the Turkish Empire of which I have been speaking lies equally as a menace on the flank of one line of communication as of the other. It seems to me, too, that in assuming an attitude of uncompromising hostility to German aspirations in this matter, we are courting a situation which may prove infinitely more difficult to deal with and far more dangerous to

ourselves than that which exists, or at any rate until quite recently did exist, in this part of the world.

The aspirations of Russia in South-Western Asia are well known. We are credibly informed that at one time Russia herself, at the suggestion of the official Tugovitch, considered the advisability of building the Baghdad Railway. The prospect of such an undertaking being carried out by another Power was infinitely distasteful to her, and it was perhaps only natural, therefore, that the chorus of congratulations which rang from the Russian press when the cold reception accorded to the scheme by the House of Commons in the spring of 1903 became known, should have been indecorously loud. The opposition of Russia, in fact, in conjunction with the opposition of this country, raised an almost insuperable obstacle in the path of German ambition. But issues fraught with momentous possibilities have been born in the Cabinets of Europe since the House of Commons expressed its extreme antipathy to the German railway scheme in the spring of 1903. France has drawn nearer to England; Russia has become entangled in a devastating and exhausting war in the Far East; and, more important still in connection with the subject with which I am here concerned, Germany has during the past few months

shown an ostentatious desire to be looked upon as the friend in need of Russia. I need not recapitulate all the recent acts of benevolent neutrality which Germany has perpetrated in the interests of Russia, whereby she is laying up for herself a rich credit account with that country, which will some day have to be paid off. But I would direct your attention to the shape which that payment may not improbably assume. Is it not possible — nay, even probable — that Russia's acquiescence or even co-operation in the Baghdad Railway scheme may at some future time figure as part payment of Germany's little bill? And when this country finds herself alone of all the Powers in opposition to the scheme, will she still be prepared to prevent its consummation? And if she is not, will she look on with satisfaction at a Persia and a Turkey dominated by the diplomatists and Ministers of a hostile Russo-German combination?

That the German Emperor is bent upon carrying out his purpose has all along been sufficiently clear, and has been recently emphasised on the occasion of the opening of the recently completed section of the line over the 200 kilometres between Konia and Bulgurlu. In forwarding his congratulations to Herr Gwinner upon that occasion, the Emperor said: "I am glad that German enterprise and German engineering skill have succeeded in advancing this notable undertaking

to this important stage, in spite of the manifold difficulties which have been encountered. I cannot refrain from expressing to you, as well as to all those who are engaged in this great enterprise, my full recognition of what has been achieved hitherto, together with my warmest wishes for the further successful construction and for the final completion of the Baghdad railway." Judging by the methods of German diplomacy in the past, there would be nothing in the least surprising in finding her at some future time walking hand in hand with Russia through Mesopotamia to the Persian Gulf. German influence predominant in Asiatic Turkey would be bad enough; but, after all, the nearest German port is thousands of miles away on the shores of the North Sea, whereas the baneful shadow of the Power of Russia, whose aggressive policy and vast ambition comes into hostile contact with our own country in every corner of Asia, hangs heavily over the whole length of the northern frontiers of Persia and the Ottoman Empire, and threatens to steal south till it reaches the shores of the Indian Ocean.[1]

There is another point to which I would like to draw your attention: that is, the nature of the country through which the line must pass. Part of it is, and always must be, of little intrinsic

[1] The collapse of Russia in the Far East and the subsequent Anglo-Russian Agreement altered the situation.

value, but much of it is, on the other hand, possessed of vast potentialities. "Mesopotamia and the Karun districts," wrote Colonel Picot in the paper already referred to, "are the richest undeveloped fields in the Middle East, of surprising promise and potentiality. I pray that the genius of the Anglo-Saxon race may be the moving powers in the regeneration of these regions." That is a sentiment which we all of us may echo, and there will probably be few who will deny that railroad iron is the magician's rod that is destined to evoke the sleeping energies of land and water. As an example of what has already been affected by railways in Asia Minor, I may call to witness the report published by the Public Debt Administration in 1903, wherein it is estimated that the tithes of the districts traversed or affected by the railways have increased in the last twelve years by forty-six per cent, and the statement by Consul Waugh that the Angora district, which exported no grain before the railway was opened, now has an annual export of wheat and barley valued at from £1,500,000 to £2,000,000. Such is the result of the modest railway system that is already in existence.

But there are in the south-eastern districts of Asiatic Turkey lands which are possessed of infinitely greater potentialities than the provinces through which the railway already runs, and

which are but awaiting the bidding of the engineer to bear produce of incalculable value. "This land," wrote Herodotus, "is of all lands with which we are acquainted by far the best for the growth of corn. . . . It is so fruitful in the produce of corn that it yields continually two hundredfold, and when it produces its best it yields even three hundredfold. The blades of wheat and barley grow there to full four fingers in breadth; and though I well know to what a height millet and sesame grow, I shall not mention it, for I am well assured that to those who have never been in the Babylonian country what has been said concerning its productions will appear to many incredible." I have never regarded the historian of Halicarnassus as a timid chronicler, or as one who found matter for surprise, even in regard to facts which might strike the average observer as out of the ordinary; and when, therefore, we are told of crops of such a kind that even so bold a historian as Herodotus dares not venture to describe them, we may rest assured that we are dealing with material of no ordinary description. But we are not dependent solely upon the evidence of Herodotus for forming an opinion upon the latent wealth of Babylonia. There are in Upper Chaldæa, according to Sir William Willcocks—the famous originator of the great Assouan dam on the Nile—no less than

"1,280,000 acres of first-class land waiting only for water to yield at once a handsome return." "Of all the regions of the earth," writes that great irrigation expert, "no region is more favoured by Nature for the production of cereals than the lands of the Tigris. . . . Cotton, sugar-cane, Indian corn, and all the summer products of cereals, leguminous plants, Egyptian clover, opium, and tobacco, will find themselves at home as they do in Egypt."

Here, then, is an opening for British enterprise and capital. Here is an opportunity for Great Britain to encourage British capital to develop the resources of Mesopotamia, "as strengthening her political claims to consideration and excluding that of possible antagonists." Sir William Willcocks gives an idea of the probable cost of a scheme of irrigation and of its probable results. £8,000,000, he says, would suffice for the irrigation of the 1,280,000 acres of Upper Chaldæa—£7, that is, per acre. He values the land roughly at £38,000,000, and, placing the rent at about £3 per acre, shows a return of £3,840,000. Allowing nearly half this sum for the upkeep of canals, there is still a net return of £2,000,000, or 25 per cent on a capital of £8,000,000.[1]

[1] Since the revolution in Turkey, Sir W. Willcocks has been engaged by the Turkish Government to draw up a scheme of irrigation and to inaugurate the enterprise.

In considering the whole question of the regeneration of Chaldæa, it is essential that schemes of irrigation and projects for railway construction should be conceived and carried out in connection with one another. In Egypt the soil extracted in the cutting of a canal forms the embankment upon which the line of rails is laid. "Indeed," writes Sir William Willcocks, "it would be an irreparable mistake if the railways were aligned and constructed independently of the irrigation canals, and if, by some ill chance, the railways traversed one part of the delta, and the profitably irrigable part of the delta were to lie elsewhere. . . . In Egypt the railways and canals are designed together, the canals preceding the railways and settling their location." The builders of the Baghdad Railway should obviously bear in mind the analogous case presented by Egypt when they come to draw their ribbon of steel through the fertile lands of the Tigris — a necessity, indeed, to which our German friends are fully alive. And for the benefit of those who are content to see our own country stand aside and look passively on while a position of paramount influence in this region is being slowly but surely assumed by a great foreign Power, I may add that I happen to be aware that the attention of German engineers has been explicitly directed to the matter upon which I

have touched by no less a person than the German Emperor himself.

Now, I cannot afford further space in this paper to discussing the development of the Near East. In the course of my journey I made notes of what Russia is doing in the way of opening what may be described as the back-door to the Far East, and it is my intention to make brief mention of what I observed, not because I consider Russian enterprise in this part of the world—in Mongolia and Western China, that is to say—to be of the same interest and immediate importance to us as are her movements in Manchuria and the Near and Middle East, but because, for the very reason that it is not, little curiosity is ever shown with regard to it. I may, however, be allowed to make rapid mention on my way of the advance which has recently been made in railway development is Asiatic Russia itself. Little alteration has been made in the Trans-Caspian Railway since the work for carrying on the line from Samarkand to Tashkent and Andijan, taken in hand in 1895, was completed. The much-talked-of branch from Ashkabad to Mashhad still exists only in the fertile imagination of alarmists, while the famous Murghab branch, completed in 1899, still rests at the Afghan frontier. The object of this line has never been doubted, and though it is as

jealously guarded from foreign gaze as was until recently the Tibetan oracle of Lhasa, it is whispered that its terminus is to be found within the walls of a heavily-armed fort, garrisoned by a number of troops which at least reaches four figures, and with barrack accommodation for even more. There is also said to be a light railway running over the twelve miles between Kushk post and Chehel Dukhteran, while it is asserted that the length of rails stored within the fort is greater than is the distance to Herat. Who can doubt that some day, when Afghanistan as such has ceased to exist, here will lie the direct overland route to India?

At one point the Trans-Caspian Railway has received important attention at the hand of the engineer—at the point, that is to say, where it crosses the ancient Oxus. Here the great cumbrous wooden structure erected by the Polish engineer Bielinski, on supports in the shape of 3300 wooden piles driven into the river-bed in 1887, has been supplanted by a fine steel girder bridge a verst and a half in length, which enables one to cross the river in three or four minutes—a great improvement upon the twenty minutes which I was informed was necessary for the passage of the older construction.

But far overshadowing in importance any improvement in the existing line is the completion

of the new line from Orenburg to Tashkent. This line, which was in process of construction when I was at Tashkent, is now completed as far as the actual rail-laying is concerned, and will in all probability be opened for passenger traffic in the course of the coming summer. Starting from Orenburg, a town of some 60,000 inhabitants, built on the banks of the Ural River, it passes by the towns of Ilensk on the river Ilek, Aktiubinsk, Kazalinsk, Perovsk, and Turkestan to Tashkent, covering in all a distance of upwards of 1000 miles. Its importance is considerable, both from a commercial and from a strategic point of view. Raw cotton from the productive cotton-lands of Ferghana will now be carried direct to the cotton-mills at Moscow. The increased facility and cheapness of importing corn from Russia under the advantages of the "zone" system common in that country will admit of more and more of the lands of Central Asia being given up to the cultivation of the cotton plant, and ere long, no doubt, will place Russia on the highroad to realising one of her ambitions —namely, to supply from her own dominions the whole of the increasing demand of those cotton factories which have sprung up in recent years to make Moscow a modern manufacturing city. By the completion of the line, too, Tashkent is brought within a week of St Petersburg, and

in the matter of carrying troops, within fourteen days of the great military centres of Odessa, Simpheropol, Kieff, Kharkoff, and Moscow. The 1st and 2nd Turkestan Army Corps, quartered at Tashkent and Ashkabad, will in the future be fed by a direct line of railway communication in their rear in place of the Trans-Caspian Railway, with its break necessitated by the twenty hours' passage of the Caspian Sea, which will necessarily fall into the position of a mere supplementary line of communication, and Russia's power of mobilising troops in Central Asia will be more than doubled. So much for Russian activity in Central Asia. Now for a word as to her enterprise on the western frontiers of China.

My journey took me to Kulja, and later on to the Siberian and Mongolian frontier. At the former place no signs of progressive activity were visible. Russian influence is represented by a Russian Consul and a Cossack escort, a Russian post and telegraph office, and the insurmountable fact that half the inhabitants of the town are Russian subjects; while the dignity and prestige of the "Son of Heaven" are ostentatiously displayed in the person of a Taotai, or provincial Governor, and the whole gamut of minor officials and hangers-on. It appeared to me that Kulja has every prospect of remaining *in statu quo*

for many years to come. Russia has nothing to gain by an immediate advance in this direction, and, moreover, she was careful to see that the province was at her mercy before she withdrew under the Treaty of St Petersburg of 1881. There are, besides, other gateways into the Celestial Empire which hold out greater attractions than does the road through Kulja. Mongolia is, no doubt, for the most part a land of singular unattractiveness, but the shortest and most direct and most practicable route from Russia to Peking lies across the level stretches of the Gobi Desert. Urga, the most important town in all Mongolia, is dominated and permeated by the leavening Russian yeast; and plans and surveys have been made for a line from the Siberian Railway to Peking *viâ* Kiachta, Urga, and Kalgan, the 850 miles from Kiachta through Mongolia to Kalgan to be built by Russia, and the remaining section from Kalgan to Peking by China.[1]

To the south, again, the southern regions of Chinese Turkestan, while as much, probably, at the mercy of Russia as the less important province of Kulja, have the supreme attraction, not possessed by the latter, of lying in contact with the

[1] China has completed a line from Peking to Kalgan; but Russian policy has, of course, been modified as a result of her defeat by Japan.

semi-independent States which border upon the Indian Empire; and the possibility of controlling what Mr Chirol describes as "a 'great politico-religious organisation, whose influence can and does make itself felt all along the north-eastern borderland of India," has been shown by, comparatively speaking, recent events in Tibet to have appealed to the imagination of chauvinist statesmen in Russia in a way in which an advance into a part of the Chinese Empire, which could scarcely be deemed either necessary or advantageous, as likely to lead—for the present, at any rate—to any further advancement in a policy of territorial aggrandisement and acquisition, would scarcely be likely to do.

On the western frontier of Mongolia I found a laudable interest being taken by Russian officials in projects for stimulating and increasing trade. Manufactured and millinery goods, iron and copper wares, tanned leather and maral horns, pass into Mongolia; and in return, furs, wool, skins, brick-tea, silk stuffs, and small-wares of Chinese manufacture, are brought into Russia. This trade which had until recently attained a value of only a few hundred thousand roubles, is already showing an increased development, for the Russian authorities have spent during the past few years a sum of £7000 in constructing a road from the nearest Siberian village, Onguidai—a road which

I found sufficiently near completion to admit of the passage of light vehicles the whole distance to the frontier, whence a caravan route leads to Kobdo, Uliissatai, and Urga, the chief centres of Mongolian trade.

Trade with Mongolia is also being stimulated by the opening up of a water route *viâ* the Lower Irtish, the Nor Zaisan Lake, and the Black Irtish River, up which steamers and barges have now been run for three or four years in succession by three merchants of Semipalatinsk, who have established a station at the mouth of the Kaldjir River, a tributary of the Black Irtish. In the course of the summer before last 8000 tons of merchandise were thus carried, and two new steamers, to be built with a Government subsidy, were a short time ago put in hand. The present station at the mouth of the Kaldjir River is 45 miles from the Russian town of Zaisansk, 150 miles from the Mongolian town of Tchugutchak, and 375 miles from Kobdo. A party of surveyors and scientists were under orders at the beginning of the present year to proceed on an expedition of exploration with a view to determining the best route to this latter town; but, owing to the outbreak of war and the consequent withdrawal of all extraordinary expenditure on the part of the Government, this expedition has been postponed.

Now, I have made brief mention of some of the

evidence which came under my notice in the course of my recent journey of the unobtrusive activity of Russia in those regions which lie beyond the boundaries of her most remote possessions in Central Asia. That journey, as I have already intimated, took me on through Siberia and Manchuria to Port Arthur and Peking; but time will not admit of my embarking upon such further fields of political discussion. I will ask your indulgence but one moment longer, that I may give you my justification for having troubled you with such, comparatively speaking, trivial matters as Siberian and Mongolian trade. Such matters might well appear to be no concern of ours; the efforts, at any rate, of a great civilising Power like Russia to open up intercourse with adjoining and inferior races should evoke from the people of this country nothing but approbation and applause, and I would not have it supposed that I view such efforts on her part either with the unreasoning distrust which is the common characteristic of the alarmist, or with the jaundiced eye of a virulent and prejudiced Russophobe. But while I admit the perfect right of Russia to encourage intercourse and friendly relations with her many neighbouring States, and admire the energy and enterprise which she displays in this direction, I *do* equally hold that we, whose interest in the preservation of a state of equilibrium in

the East can scarcely be exaggerated, have every right to keep such a watch upon the progress of events among the peoples of Central Asia as will enable us at all times to preserve from possible danger the sacred trust which has devolved upon us as the overlords of the Indian Empire. As guardians of the Indian frontier, we should be guilty of neglecting our duty if we shut our eyes to the fact that a harmful intrigue has only too often accompanied Russian commercial activity in Asia in the past. A careful perusal of the Blue-Book published early this year[1] upon Tibet is hardly calculated to reassure us as to the simple disinterestedness of the motives by which Russian statesmen are actuated in that part of the world, and, indeed, a Russian of high position—Prince Ukhtomski—has himself set forth the importance to which Russian intercourse with the Buddhists of Mongolia and Tibet may eventually attain. Writing of the Buddhists in Russia, he says: "Every year thousands of them go on pilgrimage to Mongolia and to the centres of Tibetan learning. Pioneers of Russian trade and Russian good fame, representatives of the Russian name in the depths of the yellow East, are these simple little men. These nameless natives march on to the mysterious Tashe-Llunpo and the highlands adjoining India, everywhere quietly bearing into this Asiatic wilder-

[1] 1904.

ness ideas of the White Tsar and the Muscovite people. These sturdy travellers bear also the idea, vague as yet, that the Christian West is called upon to regenerate through us the effete civilisation of the East. Scarce any one in Russia guesses as yet what a valuable work is being carried on by these modest Russian Lamaites at a distance of hundreds of miles from the Russian frontier."

The escapades of the now notorious Dorjieff ring a striking comment on the words which I have just quoted; and as long as these "pioneers of Russian trade and Russian good fame" continue to sow such ideas of the White Tsar and the Muscovite people among the populations of the "highlands adjoining India," so long will it be open to us, without meriting a charge of harbouring an undue chauvinism, to keep such a watch upon our frontier as will at all times enable us to safeguard the great heritage of which we are the trustees—a heritage which is, in the words of Lord Curzon, "the noblest trophy of British genius, and the most splendid appanage of the Imperial Crown."

CHAPTER IX.

THE ANGLO-RUSSIAN AGREEMENT.[1]

(Speech in the House of Commons, February 17, 1908.)

MR SPEAKER,—I have no objection whatever in principle to the Governments of Great Britain and Russia defining in a diplomatic Agreement their spheres of influence in the three countries which are dealt with, provided, of course, that the Agreement is a fair one and of a character likely to be satisfactory to both parties. But what are we to say of the particular Agreement which is now under discussion? We are bound to look at it as a business arrangement between the two countries, defining their interests in three areas in Asia, and I will say a few words first upon the Persian side of the question, because that comes first in the three chapters of the Agreement.

Persia.—I notice that the right hon. gentleman declared that experts had been at work for many years considering the question of the extent

[1] For the text of the Agreement, *see* Appendix I.

of the interests of the two countries in Persia. It would be interesting to know who were the experts who were responsible for drawing up the preamble and Article I. of the particular portion of the Agreement which refers to Persia. We are told that in certain provinces of Persia adjoining or in the neighbourhood of the Russian frontier on the one hand, and the frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the other, the two countries have certain spheres of influence, where they are desirous of avoiding all cause of conflict, and have agreed to terms under which the line which limits the Russian sphere of influence is drawn from Ksar-i-Shirin and passing through Ispahan, Yezd, and Kahk, ends at a point on the Persian frontier at the intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontiers. It would be very interesting to know who are the experts who are prepared to state that Ksar-i-Shirin and Yezd are adjoining or in the neighbourhood of the Russian frontier. It appears that if we are not to suppose—and I cannot suppose—that the words of the preamble, "adjoining or in the neighbourhood of Russian territory," have been inserted there for the purpose of misleading public opinion, the only alternative is that the collective intelligence of his Majesty's Government is altogether devoid of a knowledge of the geographical features of a country which, with an almost reckless levity, they have set themselves to partition. But I pass

from the anomalies of the first paragraph to the actual concessions granted by one Power to the other. We find on the west, that the trade route from the Turkish frontier running from Ksar-i-Shirin through Kermanshah and Hamadan to Teheran, which has been largely built up by the enterprise of British merchants, and which carries British trade to the extent of about £750,000 a-year, is handed over gratuitously to Russia, our chief commercial rival in that part of Asia. I have travelled over every mile of that route, and having been obliged, according to the custom of the country, to progress slowly on foot and with baggage mules, I have had opportunities of studying which nation possesses commercial and political predominance in that part of the country. From the commercial point of view it is undoubtedly a great sacrifice which has been made by this country, and if we look at the concession made from the political point of view, it is equally serious. His Majesty's Government seem to be rather proud of having "scotched" the ambition of one Power by bringing another Power into the field of operations. It was quite clear from the words of the right hon. gentleman that he attached great importance to putting this territory into the hands of Russia on account of the position which another Power, Germany, had attained in the neighbourhood by the concession for the building of the Baghdad railway; but if

the Government think, by this somewhat Machiavellian policy of "scotching" the ambition of Germany by introducing Russia, they are going to benefit Great Britain, they are grievously mistaken.

SIR EDWARD GREY, who was indistinctly heard, was understood to declare that he had never stated that it was the object of this Agreement to interfere with the Baghdad railway or to prejudice German interests. His whole point was that if the Baghdad railway was to be made and Mesopotamia developed, it must affect that part of Persia, and the Russian means of communication and trade could not be shut out.

THE EARL OF RONALDSHAY.—I certainly appear to have misconstrued the words of the right hon. gentleman, but the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, speaking in another place, said that if the Government had interfered so as to prevent the route falling into Russian hands, then he thought they would in all probability have gone out of their way to bring another Power into the field against us. I can only put the construction upon those words which I, apparently erroneously, put upon the words of the Secretary of State.[1]

[1] The speech here referred to was delivered by Lord Fitzmaurice, then Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the House of Lords on February 6th, 1908. The passage in question runs as

But that is only one concession which we have made at the dictation of Russia. We have also admitted that we are no longer prepared to uphold our position of ascendancy in the provinces of Southern Persia, which only a few years ago a representative of the late Government declared, in terms which could not be mistaken, we could not abandon for any cause whatever. We have also placed the southern capital of Persia, Ispahan, under Russia. It is entirely British in its sympathies, and the trade of Great Britain is at least ten times that of Russia, and yet we have placed it in the hands of the northern Power. But it is even more astonishing to find that the Government have admitted the right of Russia to claim the town of Yezd as being within her sphere of influence. I need hardly remind hon. members that Yezd is the centre of a very important community, the fire-worshippers of Persia, who have great sympathy with the great community of Parsees, who form so important a portion of the population of one part of our own Indian dominions. What have we obtained in return for the sacrifices made

follows: "Whatever our individual views on this question may be, we all know that there is another Power, not Russia, which is taking great interest in the railway communications in the direction of Baghdad. Undoubtedly, whoever may get a railway concession and execute it to Baghdad, will desire to carry it up to the Persian frontier; and if we had interfered so as to prevent the railway beyond falling into Russian hands, then, I think, in all probability we would have gratuitously gone out of our way to bring another Power into the field against us."

in the south and west? We have as our sphere of influence a triangle of territory of about half the size of the Russian sphere, and in which, before this Agreement was concluded, the interest of Russia was practically negligible in quantity. The position of Russia in regard to Sistan in South-Eastern Persia is made a great point of by the Government in defence of their Agreement. I may perhaps be able to throw some light upon that question, because I have had the advantage of residing at Sistan myself, at a time when Russia first sought to create particular interests for herself in that particular part of Persia. She inaugurated the movement by the despatch of a consul to Sistan. That gentleman lived in splendid isolation in a mud hut, in the capital of Sistan, and his regular duties must have been exceedingly light, for he had no Russian trade to foster or encourage and no Russian subjects whose interests he was called upon to protect. Hard upon the heels of this official representing the Russian Government came an individual who I suppose must be described as an unofficial representative, in the shape of a vagrant naturalist, who was supposed to be searching for birds, butterflies, and other animalculæ in Persia, but whose real work, I know beyond dispute, was the distribution of rifles to the Baluchi chiefs on the borders of Baluchistan. The position of Russia was this—they were able to annoy Great Britain by stirring

up discontent among the tribes and by raising the plague bogey, which they did at the time of my visit, and so to harass Indian trade with Persia across the frontier. I find nothing in the Agreement in any degree calculated to put an end to these irregular proceedings if Russia should feel called upon at any time to resume them. I find no arrangement to prevent the arrival of consuls and vagrant naturalists in future. The great claim the Government make for their Agreement in this part of Persia is that they have secured immunity from a menace in the shape of the construction of a railway which, if they had studied the physical features of the country a little more accurately, they would, I think, have realised was, in point of fact, no menace whatever. Having toiled, as I have done, wearily over the gaunt succession of forbidding mountain-ranges which run parallel with one another and transversely across the whole of this part of Persia,[1] knowing as I do the profound dislike which Russian engineers entertain for anything in the semblance of a mountain-ridge, I can fully appreciate the supreme satisfaction which the diplomatists of Russia must have experienced when they realised that they had actually succeeded in persuading the authorities of this country that they harboured the intention of choosing this, the line of greatest resistance, to construct a railway across Persia.

[1] See Chapter VII.

It is open, of course, to any one to tell me that though I may know these places as a traveller, I have not that expert engineering knowledge which is necessary to give an opinion of value on this question. I am prepared, therefore, to quote the words of one whose knowledge of the physical geography of the borderlands of the Indian Empire will be undisputed—Sir Thomas Holdich—whose name is so honourably associated with the demarcation of so many frontiers on the Indian borderlands. Speaking of this particular line of country, he declared that a line from the north through Khurasan to Bunder Abbas

"possesses all the disadvantages from an engineering point of view that any line directed across a rough, mountainous country, taking each range in succession at right angles, can possess. The cost would be enormous. The 750 miles of direct measurement from Bunder Abbas, *viâ* Kerman, Turbat-i-Haideri, and Mashhad, to the Trans-Caspian line would probably expand to 1000, and that 1000 would cost five or six times the amount expended over any 1000 miles of Russian railway elcewhere in Asia. About three-quarters of it would not only be a mountain line, it would be a mountain line working at the greatest possible disadvantage, with but little base for gaining gradient on the hillsides, and little room to turn round in the intermediate valleys."

It was the menace of this practically impossible railway which his Majesty's Government have succeeded in securing us against. I would like to contrast the attitude of the Russian Govern-

ment when dealing with a true and natural line of railway development in Persia — namely, the line along the mountain valleys and along the plateaux from Teheran *viâ* Kermanshah to Baghdad. They took up an attitude of *non possumus* and said that unless we were prepared to grant them that line, in which they have no interest whatsoever, as far at any rate as the southern part of the line is concerned, either political or commercial, we should have no agreement at all.

It is impossible, of course, to refuse to make some mention of the question of the Persian Gulf. We have been given various reasons by his Majesty's Government for the non-inclusion of the *status* of Russia and ourselves in the Persian Gulf within the actual limits of the Convention itself. We have been told that other Powers besides Persia are concerned in the Persian Gulf, but I understand that this Convention is merely an Agreement between ourselves and Russia, defining our respective interests in that part of Asia. I do not understand that the Government considered it necessary, when partitioning Persia, to consult the Persian Government as to whether our spheres of interest should be included in the Agreement, and I cannot see why, therefore, it should be necessary to consult Persia or Turkey in defining our respective interests in the waters of the Persian Gulf. To sum up the effect of the Agreement with regard to

Persia, we have given up the Kermanshah trade route to which I have referred; we have abandoned our position in the southern provinces of Persia, which position a short time ago we declared in the most emphatic terms we were not prepared to give up; and we have retained in consequence only the naval control in the Persian Gulf, if indeed we have retained that for the future; and naval control, as so able a strategist as Captain Mahan has said, is an imperfect instrument unless reinforced and supported by the shores upon which it acts. We have given up a large number of the chief cities in Persia, in which the interests of this country are infinitely greater than any interest that Russia ever had or ever claimed to have in them, and in return for all this we have received as our sphere a triangle of desert and sparsely populated country half the size of the Russian sphere, and, except possibly for strategic reasons, of very little value. It can only be claimed that we have gained anything by the inclusion of the triangle in our sphere of influence on the ground that we have secured immunity from attack upon that side of the Indian Empire, and I fail to see how we have secured any immunity which we did not possess before. Sistan, if war is ever to come, is as much at the mercy of Russia to-day as before the treaty was concluded, and that the position of Sistan would ever have become a greater menace to us

than it is at present is sufficiently doubtful in view of the physical features of the country.

Afghanistan. — A great point made by the Government is that for the first time in a definite treaty we have the assurance of Russia that Afghanistan is outside her sphere of influence. We must take it from that, that the Government do not attach very great value to the explicit assurances of Russia unless they are contained in the form of a definite treaty. If that is so, why is it that they are content to accept merely an explicit assurance with regard to the Persian Gulf, whereas they have made such concessions in order to get within the limits of a treaty the assurances which Russia have repeatedly made, eleven or twelve times since she first made them in 1872, that Afghanistan is outside the sphere of her influence? There is another point which is an extremely important one with regard to Afghanistan. I understand that we are practically pledged to take no steps to make preparations to defend Afghanistan in the possible event of any future attack upon that country. At the same time, as has been pointed out, Russia is to be permitted to continue to make any conceivable preparation which she may consider advisable, not only for defence but for offence, along the whole length of the frontier of Afghanistan. The Government do not seem to realise that when war comes paper Agreements inevitably go to the wall, and that

the whole object of a treaty of this kind should consequently be either to prohibit the Power with whom you are negotiating from making preparations for war on the frontier in time of peace, or, if that is impossible, at any rate to secure for yourselves the right of preparing defences. It does not seem to have been sufficiently recognised that we are pledged by the most solemn engagements to defend Afghanistan from any attack from without. There are, of course, many minor points open to criticism in the Convention. It seems to me to be a rather one-sided agreement when we give Russia freedom of trade in Afghanistan, but apparently ask for no similar advantages in Turkestan, Bokhara, and Trans-Caspia, which are the possessions of Russia lying along the Afghan frontier. There also appears to be a great deal of doubt with regard to agents, as in one part of the Agreement we are told that Russia pledges herself not to send them into Afghanistan, and in another part that if commercial expansion should justify it in the future, the question of sending agents there will be duly considered. The Government failed to realise that in the Russian service there is no difference between commercial and political agents. If Russia is to be permitted in the future to send commercial agents into Afghanistan, that country will inevitably cease to remain outside the sphere of her influence.

Tibet.—In Tibet we, with a long coterminous

land frontier, with trade relations extending back over a long period of years between India and that country, with treaties and agreements, with the expedition which has cost no small sum of money and no few lives carried out to enforce respect for those treaties, have placed ourselves upon a mere equality with Russia, the nearest point of whose frontier is not within hundreds of miles of the northern part of the country. There is only one word which can adequately describe the diplomacy which boasts of such an achievement—the word "grotesque." I cannot conceive on what ground the Government have admitted that Russia should possess a position of equality with us in that country. If her claim to equality is admitted on the grounds that a large number of her subjects look to Lhasa as the central point of adoration of their religion, a very large question is opened and a very dangerous precedent set. Are we to understand that in the future, supposing some question in another part of Asia arises, Russia, because she has a large number of Mohammedan subjects, is to be able to claim equality of interest with us in the great centres of the Mohammedan religion? Are we to understand that this is to be a precedent for Russia claiming equality of interest in Mecca or other centres in which Great Britain has interests of paramount importance? This question

presents many very serious difficulties for the future. The Chumbi Valley has been singled out as a specific case in which there is to be definite equality of interest between this country and Russia. I do not need to remind the House that prior to 1890 a violation of the Indian Frontier Treaty by the Tibetans necessitated the Convention of 1890, and that the Convention of that year was followed by the Trade Regulations made in 1893. One of the provisions of that Agreement granted free trade between the two countries for a term at any rate of five years. The Tibetan officials did not attach the same meaning to free trade which I presume is attached to the word by the members of the Government, because it was found that one of these officials in contravention of the Agreement was levying a ten per cent *ad valorem* duty on all British and Indian goods which passed through his district. The result of this and of the violation of our frontier by the Tibetans was the despatch of a mission to Lhassa under Colonel Younghusband, the outcome of which we all know. The point I wish to make is, that when next our Agreements with Tibet are travestied or our frontier violated by the Tibetans, we are apparently to consult with Russia before we take any steps to secure the carrying out of our legal rights. That appears to me to be a position of intolerable humiliation.

In the case of the Chumbi Valley, for instance, if the evacuation is not carried out for any particular reason, is it to be the subject of discussion between the two Governments? I should like to know, if a similar case arises in the future, are we still to be bound to ask the Russian Government's advice in dealing with these questions affecting the frontier? If that is so, all that the critic can ask is, What in Heaven's name has Russia got to do with the Chumbi Valley or the Indian frontier? I wish to mention one more absurdity before I resume my seat. We have bound ourselves by a solemn pledge to the Government of a third Power never to send a representative to Lhassa. It appears to me to be an unreasonable thing to bind this country to any third Power never to send a representative to the capital of a country which is coterminous with our own for many hundreds of miles. Such an agreement can only have been made on the assumption that China always has been, is now, and always will be, able to control the action of the Tibetans. The whole teaching of history tells us that that is not the case, and that the future will falsify the teaching of the past I do not believe, judging from certain happenings on the frontier of China and Tibet which came to my knowledge when travelling through those countries not long ago. If it is found at some future time that

China is unable to answer for the Tibetans over whom she holds a shadowy suzerainty, what is to be our position now that this country has bound itself not to deal with the Government of Tibet? I would like to say a word upon two aspects of the Agreement looked at as a whole. I think his Majesty's Government has not been very successful, either in this House or in another place, in defending the particular articles of their Convention dealing with the particular countries in regard to which the Agreement has been drawn up. We have been repeatedly asked not to look too microscopically at the details of the Agreement, but to consider the value of the Agreement as a whole. If the Agreement is able to bring about that amelioration between the relations of Russia and this country which his Majesty's Government appear to think it will, I shall be inclined to say that even these rash concessions which they have made will not prove in the long-run to have been too great. But there are two other aspects to be considered, when we look at the results regarded as a whole, which have not been touched upon and have received very little attention. What is going to be the result of this Agreement upon British enterprise throughout the Eastern world? I think it will be admitted that the British Empire in the past has been built up very largely, if not almost exclusively, by individual action and in-

dividual enterprise. Our position in Persia has been built up very largely by the enterprise of Anglo-Indian and British merchants, and when they see the result of much patient labour and toil, upon which many valuable lives have been spent, dashed to the ground with a single stroke of the quill of an uncomprehending Government, the result will be that of a douche of cold water thrown upon British enterprise, not only in those particular districts, but in other corners of Asia and the world in general. What is going to be the result of this treaty upon the prestige of Great Britain in Eastern countries, and more especially in India itself? Only those who have lived amongst Eastern people can realise what prestige means to them. It is impossible for anybody who has not been in Eastern countries to realise what the effect will be of what is doubtless looked upon as a retreat by Great Britain before Russia upon those people who dwell upon the borders of the North-West frontier of India. Hon. members who have had personal experience in India, and others who have heard of the extraordinary rapidity with which news of this kind travels in Eastern countries, independently of the material assistance of telegraphs, the post, or railways, know how stories of this kind ring round the bazaars of an Eastern city; anybody who knows the North-West frontier of India

knows that the one absorbing topic of conversation in its bazaars for many years has been the respective power of Russia and Great Britain in that part of Asia. I have laid stress upon that point because it seems to me that at the present time the peoples of the East are beginning to treat with rather less respect than in the past the prestige of the white man; and knowing that we must continue in the future, as we have done in the past, to govern India almost exclusively by prestige, I have no hesitation in saying that the result of what will be looked upon as a retreat before the power of Russia will have a very undesirable effect upon the unruly tribes we are called upon to govern on those frontiers. In criticising this treaty I have regarded it as a business arrangement drawn up between two Powers, and holding the views I do after ten years' study of these frontier questions, am bound to criticise somewhat severely particular items in the Agreement. I sincerely hope, nevertheless, that the aspirations which his Majesty's Government hold with regard to promoting a better state of feeling, of which this may be the forerunner, between the two great countries may see fulfilment, in spite of the forebodings which I and others who have studied the question on the spot cannot help but feel when we criticise particular details of the Agreement.

CHAPTER X.

THE AWAKENING OF THE EAST.

(A Speech at the Annual General Meeting of the Central Asian Society, 1909.)

It is usual for the Chairman to take the opportunity provided by the annual meeting of the Society to make a few observations as to the work and aims of the Association. You will remember that when we first were constituted as a Society most of the problems its members were called upon to consider owed their existence to the "forward policy" of a great Western Power—Russia. For a century, the shadow of her advance had been creeping forward, stealing across the vast spaces of Central Asia, enveloping kingdoms, principalities, cities, in its sombre embrace. At one time or another Khiva, Bokhara, Samarkand, Tashkend, Merve were blotted out of the map as separate and independent organisms, and converted into stepping-stones for further advance towards the glacis of India.

Cantonments were laid out, roads and railways were built, an unceasing activity — the source of constant anxiety to the statesmen of this country — was in progress throughout Central Asia, until the head of the Russian advance bit like the head of some vast wedge into the very frontier of Afghanistan itself. On either flank of this convenient centre such operations were pushed forward as seemed best calculated to heighten the prestige of Russia at the expense of Great Britain. In Persia political ends were advanced under the convenient cover of commercial and financial operations, while in Tibet intrigues calculated to seriously lower the prestige of this country, if not to create active disturbance on the Indian frontier, were embarked upon. In short, Russia, with her vast ambitions and her unarrested advance, stood with drawn sword in dangerous proximity to the Indian frontier, and the energies and resource of British statesmanship were concentrated in an endeavour to preserve such buffer States as remained — Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet — from a clearly threatened extinction. Such a position provided ample material for useful study and research, and much expert knowledge of the problems arising therefrom was collected and made public through the medium of our Society. I believe that in the papers and information we were

able to lay before the public at that time we very well justified our existence.

Ladies and gentlemen, I need hardly remind you that since we first became a Society great changes have taken place in the Eastern situation. Our relations with Russia are far happier than was the case a few years ago; the prospect of collision between the two Powers is, for the time being at any rate, in abeyance. But problems of far greater significance to the world as a whole, and to Great Britain in particular, are arising, which merit the most earnest thought and study on the part of members of our Society. I refer to the problems presented by the growing desire for self-assertion which is stirring the pulses of the Eastern races themselves. I do not mean to say that we should ignore the presence of European rivals in the Asiatic field. On the contrary, I think we require unceasing watchfulness to maintain our position in the East against the friendly rivalry of other European Powers. If I may give you an example, only a few days ago Germany, by a skilful coup, elbowed her way into the Yangtse Valley, through the agency of a railway concession. There are railways awaiting building in other parts of Asia besides the Yangtse Valley—in the neighbourhood of the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers, for instance—and I suggest

to the members of this Society that the many problems provided by possible railway concessions in different parts of Asia will be well worthy of their attention in the not very far distant future.

But above all, I wish to urge upon you once again — for I have touched upon this matter before — the immense vista of difficulty and possibly of danger opened up by the newly awakened ambitions and aspirations of the Eastern races themselves. What may be the final outcome of the collision between the cold, unimaginative, practical thought of the Western races and the devout and contemplative mind of the East it is impossible to foretell. This, however, is certain—that contact with Western thought and Western ideals has exercised a revivifying influence upon all the races of the East. Those that have come into sharpest contact with it have exhibited most markedly its effects. Japan, China, Turkey have shown, or are showing, in greater or less degree, not only the desire, but the ability, to assimilate something at least of Western ways and Western ideals. Even Persia, less open, perhaps, than the countries I have named to Western influences, by reason of her geographical position, is undergoing a strange metamorphosis, a phenomenon which in itself should prove of sufficient interest and importance to rivet the attention of the

members of this Society. And when we come to Afghanistan we may at least say this, that it has exhibited a vitality as to which serious doubts might well have been entertained less than a quarter of a century ago. The pathetic plaint of the late ruler of that country must surely still ring in the ears of those who know, and delight in, Sir Alfred Lyall's 'Verses written in India':—

"The kingdoms of Islam are crumbling,
And round me a voice ever rings
Of death and the doom of my country—
Shall I be the last of its kings?"

Those who have closely observed the vigour, and at the same time the restraint, with which the Mohammedan community in India have pressed their claims in connection with Lord Morley's reform scheme must realise that there is an immense force latent in the world of Islam, which, when it is attuned—as it is now being attuned — to modern conditions, may have an incalculable influence on the destinies of Asia, and, I need hardly say, on the destinies of this country as the first European Power in Asia. (Hear, hear.) I will not expatiate further upon these questions. I venture to hope that in this brief review I have said enough to show that if ever there was justification for the

existence of the Central Asian Society, there is justification for it now. As Chairman for the time being, I look forward with confidence to the career of undiminished usefulness which I am convinced lies before us as a Society. (Hear, hear.)

PART III.

INDIA

CHAPTER XI.

INDIA AND POLITICAL REFORM.

ANY one seeking to understand the problems with which British statesmanship is confronted in India is foredoomed to failure unless he first learns to think of India not as a country but as a continent, and of the Indian people not as a nation but as a vast and complex mosaic of peoples, differing from one another as widely as do the countries in which they dwell. To think of India as one would think of Great Britain or of France is to think of a purely imaginary India which has no existence in fact; if an analogy from Europe may be drawn at all, it is to be found in Europe itself, and not in any one of its component parts. The reason is simple. The elements necessary for the creation of a homogeneous nation—common language, common faith, common institutions—have never been found in India. Successive waves of invasion through centuries of time have left upon her soil frag-

ments of many of the races of mankind, widely differing in speech, in religion, in custom, and in tradition—races which have never fused but remain to this day peoples apart. The Hindu peoples, vanquished and broken up by the incoming Mohammedans, nevertheless continued to circumscribe their religious and social condition by a vigorous caste system; the Mohammedan conquerors retained unaltered the language and customs and habits of thought which they brought with them from the lands of their birth. No internal power has ever proved capable of giving cohesion to the unstable congeries of hostile and warring entities which has been thus evolved, and it has only been with the advent of a strong ruling power from without that internal strife has gradually given place to peace and chaos to order.

With a handful of British civilians, and an army of 76,000 European and 159,000 Indian troops, Great Britain governs and secures against invasion a population of 231,000,000 people, scattered over 983,000 square miles of territory, while she also maintains close relations with the great ruling chiefs of feudatory states, whose joint population amounts to 63,000,000, and whose area totals 656,000 square miles. And above all, she has given to India the inestimable blessing of internal peace. "For a longer period than ever

was known in your land before," runs a significant sentence in the proclamation of King Edward VII. of November 1908, "you have escaped the dire calamities of war within your borders. Internal peace has been unbroken."

The Government of India.

British Empire in India grew steadily and in spite of British Cabinets at home, and a system of government had to be extemporised, altered, enlarged, improved, to meet the requirements of the rapid progress of events. In the early days of the East India Company the affairs of each settlement—Bengal, Madras, Bombay—were administered by a President and Council, the respective districts being termed Presidencies. In 1773 Parliament had enacted a law providing for the government of Bengal by a Governor-General and Council of four, the decision of the majority of the Council being final. The impossibility of government on these lines was made clear by the notorious dissensions between Francis and Warren Hastings, and in 1786 the Governor-General was given the power of overriding the decisions of his Council. In 1793 the governors of Madras and Bombay were accorded a similar power; the governors of those presidencies were

conceded the right of making their own laws and regulations, and the supreme authority of the Governor-General in Council over the whole of India was distinctly declared.

As time went on the tendency towards the creation of a supreme central Government for Imperial requirements and of Provincial Governments to meet the necessities of local administration increased. In 1833 the Governor-General in Council of Bengal became the Governor-General of India. The Bengal Presidency was divided into Bengal and the "North-West Provinces," the former remaining under the Governor-General of India officiating as Governor, and the latter being given into the charge of a Lieutenant-Governor without a Council. In 1853 the Governor-General of India was relieved of that part of his dual duty represented by the Governorship of Bengal, and that province was placed under the charge of a Lieutenant-Governor without a Council.

In 1858, the year following the Mutiny, the Government of India was transferred from the Company to the Crown, all the powers of the Company and of the "Board of Control" being transferred to a Secretary of State in concert in certain cases with a Council. The system of Government in India itself remained unchanged. In 1861 the India Councils Act was

passed, and upon this Act is based the system of government which has obtained in India up to the passing of the India Councils Act of 1909.

By the Act of 1861 the power of appointing the Governor-General of India and the ordinary members of his Council is vested in the Crown. Under the same Act the Governor-General is given the power of making rules and orders for the more convenient transaction of business in his Council. Thus empowered, Lord Canning, who was Governor-General at the time, transformed his Council into a Cabinet, each member being placed in charge of a department. The above Council is known as the *Executive Council.*

In addition to the *Executive Council* there is a *Legislative Council,* consisting of the Executive Council with certain additional nominated members. By the Act of 1861 the Governor-General was empowered to nominate a maximum of twelve additional members, at least six of whom must be non-official.

In 1892 a step was made towards more representative government by the Act of that year. Under its provisions the number of additional members of the Viceroy's Council was fixed at not less than ten and not more than sixteen. Under the rules drawn up for carrying out the provisions of the Act the following pro-

cedure was adopted: ten additional members to be non-official; six additional members to be official, —the official members to be appointed by the Governor-General. Of the non-official members, five to be appointed by the Governor-General, four by the Governor-General on the recommendation of the majority of the non-official additional members of the Provincial Legislative Councils — Madras, Bombay, Bengal, and the United Provinces (North-West Provinces)— and one on the recommendation of the Calcutta Chamber of Commerce. This Constitution remained in force up to the passing of the Act of 1909.

Under the same rules the members of the Legislative Council were given the opportunity, not hitherto enjoyed, of criticising the financial policy of the Government, the annual Financial Statement having to be made publicly in the Council. Provision was also made for questions under conditions similar to those obtaining in the House of Commons. By the Act of 1892 similar changes were made in the Councils of Madras and Bombay. Twenty additional members were appointed in each case by the Governor, at least eleven of whom must be non-official. Discussion of the annual Financial Statement was provided for, and also the asking of questions. All laws passed by the Provincial Legislative Councils require the sanction of the

Governor-General, and may be disallowed by the Crown.

The other Provinces under Lieutenant-Governors have no Executive Councils;[1] but the Governor-General in Council has the power to establish Legislative Councils in all such Provinces. This has now been done in every case —in Bengal in 1862; in the United Provinces in 1886, in the Punjab and Burmah in 1897. A new Lieutenant-Governorship was created by the partition of Bengal, and a Legislative Council was established in the new Provinces called Eastern Bengal and Assam in 1905.

The minor Provinces have no Legislative Councils and are under officials known as Chief Commissioners—*i.e.*, the Central Provinces, the Andamans, Coorg, Ajmeer, the North-West frontier Province (created in 1901), and British Baluchistan. British India is thus divided into thirteen local Governments of varying rank and importance; two Presidencies — Madras and Bombay; five Lieutenant-Governorships — Bengal, the United Provinces, Eastern Bengal and Assam, the Punjab, and Burmah; and six Chief Commissionerships. It may be added that changes have taken place from time to time in the composition of the Viceroy's Executive Council, which

[1] By the India Councils Act, 1909, power is given to create an Executive Council in Bengal, and such a Council was created by proclamation of the Governor-General in Council on November 18th, 1910.

is now composed as follows: (1) The Minister of Foreign Affairs (the Governor-General); (2) The Minister of the Home Department; (3) The Minister for Revenue and Agriculture and Public Works; (4) The Minister for the Legislative Department; (5) The Minister for the Financial Department; (6) The Minister for the Department of Commerce and Industry; and (7) The Minister for Education.[1]

The Home Government.

As has already been said, when the Government of India was transferred to the Crown the powers of the East India Company and of the "Board of Control" were vested in a Secretary of State, at whose disposal was placed a consultative body known as the Council of India, consisting of fifteen members all experienced in Indian affairs. In 1889 an Act was passed empowering the Secretary of State to reduce the number of his Council to ten by abstaining from filling vacancies, and it was enacted that the majority of the Council must have resided in India for at least ten years and have left that country not more than ten years on their appointment.

[1] August 1910. The creation of a department for education was officially announced in July.

By the India Council Act of 1907 the number of the Council was raised from twelve, at which it then stood, to fourteen, and the salaries of the members reduced from £1200 to £1000. More noteworthy than the change in number was the nature of the two new appointments. For the first time two natives of India—a Hindu, Mr Krishna Gobinda Gupta, C.S.I., and a Mohammedan, Mr Syed Hussein Bilgrami, C.S.I.[1]—were appointed, though no new Act was necessary on this ground. Other changes brought about by the Act were the reduction of the period of absence from India before appointment from ten to five years, and the reduction of the term of office from ten to seven years.

The Council of India is in the main a consultative body; but it also possesses some powers. By the Act of 1858 it was laid down that the expenditure of the revenues of India should be subject to the control of the Secretary of State in Council. This, however, only applies to the ordinary business of the administration. All matters requiring secrecy may be disposed of by the Secretary of State alone — matters relating to Foreign Powers, the making of peace or war, &c., — and despatches from India on similar matters marked "secret" are not communicated

[1] Since resigned. Mr Mirza Abbas Ali Baig appointed in his place, June 4, 1910.

to the members of the Council unless the Secretary of State so directs. Generally speaking, all ordinary business passes through the Council, and though the Secretary of State can decide against his Council except in the matter of expenditure of Indian revenues, every order proposed to be made by him must either be submitted to a meeting of the Council or be placed in the Council room for seven days, unless the matter is one of extreme urgency.

The Reform Scheme of 1909.

As has been stated, the India Council's Act of 1892 was designed to give Indians a greater share in the government of the country than they had hitherto possessed. Though the Indian element which was thereby introduced into the legislative councils was not large, and the power thus acquired by Indians for influencing legislation limited, the Act marked a new stage in the advancement of India. And it was only to be expected that with the continued spread of education of a Western type and the expansion of the Eastern mind induced by a variety of causes,[1] the progress of events should demand a further advance along the lines laid down

[1] See Chapter XII.

by Lord Lansdowne's Government in 1892. Nor was the twentieth century many years old before it became evident that the demand was about to be made. Lord Minto, who had gone out to India as Viceroy in the autumn of 1905, soon realised that among the many and complex elements which went to swell the volume of unrest, so soon to provide the supreme problem for British statesmanship in India, was a not unnatural discontent among the educated classes with the restricted opportunities afforded them for taking that share in the government of the country to which they considered themselves entitled. It was fully understood that there was a growing section of the educated community which harboured desires which were wholly inimical to the continuance of British rule, and it was realised from the outset that any hope that the extension of political privileges would meet the case of these men was foredoomed to disappointment. But it was held that the excesses of the extremists ought not to be allowed to stand in the way of the fulfilment of the legitimate aspirations of moderate men, and with a courage which calls for the highest admiration, Lord Minto's Government set to work on the onerous and immensely difficult task of devising a scheme of reform to meet the claims of the Constitutionalists, while at the same time con-

triving measures to deal with and defeat the threatening situation arising out of the seditious agitation engineered by the disloyal.

With this end in view a circular embodying the views of the Government of India upon possible reforms in the system of government, and asking for comments and criticisms thereon, was issued to the local Governments and Administrations in August 1907. The proposals contained therein were duly reported on by the local Governments, and on October 1, 1908, the Government of India submitted their revised programme to the Secretary of State. The proposals made were briefly as follows:—

(1) The creation of a Council of Chiefs as an Imperial Advisory Council to the Government of India.

(2) The enlargement of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils.

(3) The provision of more ample facilities for the discussion of the Imperial and Provincial budgets.

(4) The extension of the right to ask questions to the members of all Provincial Councils.

(5) The accordance of a statutory right to the members of Legislative Councils to move resolutions on subjects of public importance, subject to certain

checks; such resolutions to have as much, but no more force than resolutions moved by private members in the House of Commons.

The scheme embodied in these proposals was a moderate one which aimed at incorporating in the government of the country "the landed aristocracy of India, the mercantile and industrial classes, and the great body of moderate men who, under existing conditions, have no sufficient inducement to enter political life and find but little scope for the exercise of their legitimate influence."[1]

It was, perhaps, inevitable that in the eyes of a man like Lord Morley, with no personal experience of Eastern conditions to counteract an ingrained bias towards the ideals of Western democracy, and with a natural inclination, consequently, to give too large a perspective to the views and ambitions of the Indian Congress party, the scheme of the Government of India should suffer from an undue Conservatism. There was much in the scheme that might be improved, he thought, by the application of a little radical embrocation. The official majorities on the Provincial Legislative Councils which the Government of India proposed retaining, and to the retention of which they attached supreme import-

[1] Circular issued by the Government of India, August 24, 1907.

ance, should be swept away; the elective system, which is wholly alien to Indian ideals and Indian tradition, should be widely extended by means of a scheme of electoral colleges; the right of asking *supplementary* questions should be—quite gratuitously—granted to members of the Legislative Councils; power should be taken to create Executive Councils in place of existing Lieutenant-Governorships; and finally, Indians should be given seats on such Councils, and an Indian should be admitted to the Cabinet itself.[1]

These were alterations and innovations of importance, and a tug-of-war ensued between the Government of India and the Home Government, the former pulling—somewhat feebly, it must be admitted—in the direction of evolution of existing institutions, and the latter in the direction of revolutionary change. The Government of India pulled half-heartedly, and the pull of Lord Morley being both vigorous and determined, they found themselves for the most part pulled over the line. In one or two respects, it is true, they held their own. Election by means of mixed electoral colleges, suggested by Lord Morley, failed to stand the test of criticism, and was discarded, and the clause by

[1] In one respect Lord Morley certainly improved upon the scheme of the Government of India—*i.e.*, in insisting upon a substantial official majority being maintained upon the Viceroy's Legislative Council.

which power was taken to create Executive Councils in the provinces, after being excised by the House of Lords and reinstated by the House of Commons, was confined in its operation to the province of Bengal. But with these exceptions radical influences prevailed, and the scheme in its final shape presented a very different appearance to the scheme as originally drawn up by the Government of India.

At the same time it is noticeable that Lord Morley repudiated the suggestion that Indian conditions admit of Parliamentary Government. He declared, indeed, with some emphasis that he would have nothing to do with any reform which would be likely to lead up to the establishment of a Parliamentary system in India; yet it would be difficult to deny that nearly every change which he proposed making in the scheme submitted to him by the Indian Government was a change in the direction of such a system. This, at any rate, was the interpretation placed upon them by prominent Indians of the Congress school, as witness the statement of Mr Surendranath Banerjee at the meeting of the National Congress held at Madras in December 1908:—

> The present constitutional scheme (Lord Morley's) is a distinct improvement upon the proposals of last year (the Government of India's scheme). The Council of

notables has disappeared, and very properly too. The advisory Councils have also disappeared. We have a scheme which is much more important for what it concedes than for what it gives up.

And again :—

I will not say that we have got all that we want. We want absolute control of our own finance and executive administration. We have got neither; *but I believe that these reforms and proposals in their normal development and in their ultimate evolution will give them both.*

It should never be forgotten that the National Congress which claims to speak for India does not, as a matter of fact, voice the views of more than a very minute fraction of the total population. Any suggestion to substitute representative government for British government would be regarded by the masses of the population — in so far as any such suggestion could be made intelligible to them—with apprehension and dislike. "The great mass of the people," wrote the Rev. Howard Campbell, a missionary by profession and a socialist in politics, "far prefer to be under British officials, and do not hesitate to protest vigorously against any attempt to set them aside in favour of their fellow-countrymen"; no hastily conceived opinion, but one given with deliberation after twenty years of labour among the peoples of India. What these people desire is not self-government but good

government, and they have learned by bitter experience that it is at the hands of British officials rather than at the hands of their own countrymen that the latter is to be obtained. When it is remembered that according to the latest census eighty-six per cent of the male population of India were returned as being illiterate, or, in other words, that out of a total male population of 150,000,000, something like 130,000,000 can neither read nor write, it will be realised how small is the proportion of the whole vast population committed to our charge which is likely to in any way benefit from the popularisation of the Government, and how immense the proportion which stands to lose by it rather than to gain.

Let us now examine briefly such alterations and innovations made by Lord Morley as found a place in the scheme in its final shape.

The Appointment of an Indian to the Viceroy's Council.

The Council of Chiefs proposed by the Government of India, which by general admission would have proved impracticable, was discarded. In place of this proposal Lord Morley took the grave step of advising His Majesty to appoint

an Indian to the Viceroy's Executive Council. No suggestion of the kind was to be found in the proposals of the Government of India themselves; yet Lord Morley announced his intention of entrusting one of the Portfolios to an Indian, and precipitately followed up his announcement by appointing a distinguished member of the Hindu community.[1] It was a step which he himself described as "an innovation in dark and obscure ground," and confidence in the wisdom of the step which he was taking was not increased by his attitude towards a not unnatural demand from the Mohammedan community that in the event of the appointment of a Hindu, a second Portfolio should be entrusted to one of their own creed and race. Accession to such a demand, he pointed out, would entail the conversion of a purely English Cabinet into a Cabinet one-third of whose members would be Indian — a change of such gravity, and capable of producing such serious results, that nothing would induce him to take the responsibility of recommending it. It is impossible to ignore the grave objections to which this "tremendous innovation" was open. It was undoubtedly viewed with intense dislike by the ruling Chiefs of India, and the feelings of the teeming millions who look upon the officers

[1] Mr Sinha, whose appointment, if an Indian was to be appointed at all, could not, probably, have been bettered.

of the Executive Council as the final arbiter of their destiny were probably those of consternation and dismay. The views of the Mohammedan community with regard to it were voiced with great clarity and force by the Aga Khan, President of the All India Moslem League, who stated that he felt that "it would have been better to have had no Indian representative on the Executive Council than one who would be representative of only one of the leading communities"; and also by the Right Hon. Syed Ameer Ali, President of the London branch of the League, in the course of a speech of great weight at a luncheon given by the League on February 23, 1909:—

> In regard to the Viceroy's Executive the Mohammedans think that the introduction of one native alone, however capable and qualified, who must necessarily belong to one or the other community, would not, in the absence of a thorough spirit of compromise among the population at large, prove satisfactory. It would give rise to frequent complaints of unfairness and prejudice, and would be detrimental to the interests of the State.

In view of weighty opinions such as these, and further, of the strong objection to the step held by men like Lord Lansdowne, Lord Curzon, and Lord Macdonnell, who possess little in common beyond a great personal knowledge of India, the defence of his proposal made by Lord Morley is scarcely convincing. "I do not say that there are

not some arguments on the other side," he declared, "but this, at all events, surely is common-sense—to have in the government of the country a man who knows the country well, who belongs to the country, and can give him (the Viceroy) the point of view of an Indian. Surely that is likely to prove an enormous advantage." One would imagine from this that the Viceroy, under existing circumstances, is unable to ascertain the "Indian point of view." Nothing could be further from the truth. As is perfectly well known, the Viceroy does now consult Indian opinion, and does now ask Indian advice upon any matter as to which he desires such advice, and not the opinion or the advice of the representatives of one section of the Indian community only; and it is, to say the least of it, surprising to find a Secretary of State solemnly suggesting that the addition of an Indian to the Executive Council is going to give the Viceroy opportunities of hearing the Indian point of view which he does not possess already. It is perhaps pertinent to repeat the question which, in effect, the Mohammedans have asked, namely, will the appointment of a Hindu to the Viceroy's Council assist the Viceroy in ascertaining the Mohammedan point of view in matters of importance to that community? And *vice versâ*. Moreover, Lord Morley unconsciously, but effectively, demolished his own argument when expressing dissent from the proposal of the Government

of India to create Advisory Councils. On this proposal he wrote: "As in the case of ruling chiefs or of notables of British India, so here too [*i.e.*, in the case of Advisory Councils], *informal consultation* with the leading men of a locality would have most or all of the advantages of an Advisory Council." If "informal consultation" is capable of giving the head of a Provincial Government the "Indian point of view" as satisfactorily as an Advisory Council created for the purpose, how is it that "informal consultation" with representatives of different interests is not capable of giving the Viceroy the "Indian point of view" as satisfactorily as the inclusion among the members of his Council of the representative of one only of the many Indian communities? There is, no doubt, a good deal to be said for the step if it can be shown to be really efficacious in satisfying Indian sentiment, for sentiment is of rare value in the East. But the fact that Mr Sinha, the first—and so far the only—Indian to occupy the proud position, has already expressed a desire to be relieved of office at an early date, would appear to suggest that the honour does not stand at quite so high a premium as some would have us believe.[1]

[1] Since the above words were written Mr Sinha's resignation has become effective, and Mr Syed Ali Imam has been appointed in his place. Mr Ali Imam is a Mohammedan, though his political views have not always been in complete harmony with those of the recognised leaders of the Mohammedan community.

The Abolition of the Official Majority on the Provincial Councils.

As has been already pointed out, the Government of India attached no small importance to the retention of an official majority on the enlarged Provincial Councils; and there is no doubt that their opinion was arrived at as a result of careful consideration of the experience of the past. It is well known, to give an instance of the importance of an official majority, that when in 1891 the Government of Bombay introduced a measure to relieve the cultivators of Gujerat from the rapacity of the money-lenders, the measure was bitterly opposed by the non-official members of the Council, and that without an official majority it could not have been passed into law. What happened in 1891 may very well happen again, and it was with this possibility in mind, no doubt, that the Government of India stated their view. It was certainly worded with uncompromising decision. "It is the desire of the Governor-General in Council," ran the Government memorandum, "that the legislative Councils in India should now be enlarged to the fullest extent compatible with the necessary authority of the Government. In carrying out this system they consider it essential that the Government should

always be able to reckon on a numerical majority, and that this majority should be strong enough to be independent of minor fluctuations which may be caused by the occasional absence of an official member. The principle of a standing majority is accepted by the Government as an entirely legitimate and necessary consequence of paramount power in India, and as far as they know it has never been disputed by any section of Indian opinion that does not dispute the legitimacy of the paramount power itself." And again, "the general principle to be borne in mind is, as already stated, that the widest representation should be given to classes, races, and interests subject to the condition that an official majority must be maintained." In face of this uncompromising expression of opinion on the part of the Government of India—an opinion which, so far as can be learned from the published documents, has never been modified or withdrawn—it is scarcely to be wondered at if Lord Morley's action was held to invite criticism. It is not possible for any one who has not had actual experience of the working of the councils to express an opinion of any value; but it is, perhaps, permissible to suggest that as some at least of the Provincial Governments did not attach great importance to the retention of an official majority, the Government of India were unduly

apprehensive of the possible results of its abolition.

The Right of asking Supplementary Questions.

The Indian official has too much to do to be able to give time to practising the arts of Parliamentary warfare, and for Lord Morley to have gone out of his way to expose him to the attack of the subtle-minded Hindu lawyer appears to have been quite unnecessary. The point is of no very great importance, but as an example of the use to which this weapon may not improbably be put, reference may be made to the following passage which appeared in an Indian newspaper when news of Lord Morley's proposal reached that country. "The power to ask supplementary questions in the hands of a well-informed and skilled interrogator must result in exposing the jugglery and fraud of official replies. A skilful cross-examiner may fairly hope to put an official member to shame by making him appear either ignorant or dishonest."

It would have been interesting to have learned what was the opinion of the Government of India upon this beneficent reform which was to be used for the purpose of "putting their officials to shame by making them appear either ignorant

or dishonest"; but here again we were not enlightened.

The Creation of Executive Councils.

In their despatch of October 1908, the Government of India threw out the suggestion that something might eventually have to be done, to render assistance to the heads of local Governments in discharging the additional duties which would not improbably devolve upon them as a result of the enlargement of the Legislative Councils and the increase in their powers. "It may be," they wrote, "that experience will show the desirability of strengthening the hands of the Lieutenant-Governors in the larger provinces by the creation of Executive Councils." But they added that it would be "premature to discuss these contingencies until experience has been gained of the working of the new legislative bodies. The creation of Councils with executive functions in provinces in which they do not exist would be a large departure from the present system of administration, and is a change that could only be recommended after the fullest consideration, and after consultation with the heads of the provinces concerned."

Lord Morley thought otherwise, and the Government of India changed their deliberately ex-

pressed opinion with curious suddenness in a telegram to the Secretary of State, read by him in the course of the debate in the House of Lords, though they still declared themselves to be opposed to any proposal "to create Councils in all the larger provinces." On learning of this change of mind on the part of the Government of India, opposition to the creation of an Executive Council in Bengal was withdrawn; but mindful of the amenity to pressure which the Indian Government had already shown, Parliament decided that the clause should be restricted in its operation to that province. In so doing, the House of Lords, who were instrumental in securing this decision, were no doubt largely influenced by the precipitate and unseemly hurry which was being shown with regard to a matter which, in the opinion of the Government of India, ought to be considered with the gravest deliberation. "The change," they had written, "could only be recommended after the fullest consideration and after consultation with the heads of the provinces concerned." In point of fact, the "heads of the provinces concerned" were consulted by telegram, and even then not as to their views on the general question of the creation of executive Councils, but as to certain lines of procedure to be followed on the assumption that executive Councils had already been

created; and they were given precisely fourteen days to deliberate upon the matter and forward their replies. However suited "hustle" of this kind may be to the circumstances and habits of the peoples of the extreme West, it is entirely out of place in the heart of the East, and that nothing is likely to be lost by the restraining influence thus exercised upon those who were so anxious to force the pace, may be gathered from the fact that although more than a year has now elapsed since power was acquired to create an executive Council in Bengal, in which province Parliament was led to believe the matter was one of urgency, no further steps appear to have been taken.[1]

The Position of the Mohammedans.

When attention was first directed towards schemes for reforming the system of government, it was at once realised that the position of the Mohammedan community must receive careful consideration. The Mohammedans in India number upwards of sixty millions, but their claims to

[1] See note on page 197. The delay in creating an Executive Council in Bengal was due, apparently, to the difficulty experienced in finding an Indian with the necessary qualifications willing to accept the office.

special consideration rest upon historical and political grounds as well as upon mere numerical strength. It was from a Mohammedan sovereign that the East India Company acquired their rights in three of the richest provinces of India, and it was a Mohammedan sovereign whose paramount position was recognised by them when they inscribed his name and insignia upon their coins. The Mohammedans, in other words, were the ruling race from whom Mahratta and other Hindu chiefs were proud to accept their titles. Their historical importance cannot, indeed, be gainsaid, and their political importance is equally well founded. No more loyal community is to be found in the Empire to-day; no community in India has provided more or better fighting material for the forces of the Crown. But beyond all this it must always be borne in mind that the followers of Islam extend far beyond the confines of the Indian Continent. The Mohammedans of India "are connected by ties of religion, tradition, and race with the whole of Western Asia and Northern Africa, right away to the Atlantic—countries where the prestige of England stands high now, and where England is recognised as the champion of justice and fair-play." [1]

What, then, did they demand? Their views

[1] The Right Hon. Syed Ameer Ali.

were clearly stated from the first, and were laid before the Viceroy by a representative deputation under the leadership of the Aga Khan. Their special requests were three in number. In the first place, they asked that in the event of a Hindu being given a seat in the Indian Cabinet, a similar honour should be accorded to a Mohammedan. In the second place, they demanded representation on the enlarged Councils in excess of their mere numerical importance; and in the third place, they pointed out that the type of Mohammedan who would be likely to be elected by a mixed electorate of Hindus and Mohammedans would not be one that would command the confidence of the bulk of the Mohammedan people, or would represent correctly Mohammedan interests; and they asked, therefore, that in any case in which a Mohammedan was to be elected to any public body—whether a municipal board, a rural board, or a legislative council—the electorate should consist solely of Mohammedans. In other words, what was especially asked for was a separate register in all cases of election.

The first of these demands was never entertained by the Government; the fulfilment of the other two was from the first definitely promised them; and a brief consideration of the reasons for what, on a superficial examination, might appear to be invidious concessions, should be suffi-

cient to convince the impartial that Lord Minto was entirely justified in assenting to them. The numerical test as between Mohammedans and Hindus is not a fair one, for the simple reason that in the census returns immense numbers of people are classed as Hindus who, for electoral purposes, cannot fairly be counted as Hindus at all. This may be aptly illustrated by a memorial drawn up by the Dravidians of Madras and presented to the Government, which runs as follows: "The differences between the Hindu and the community of the Memorialists are so great that it is a deplorable mistake to regard them as forming a part of the Hindus. There has been existing for centuries enmity and hatred between their community and that of the Hindus." Yet these people, who number something like one-sixth of the total population of Madras, are classed as Hindus for census purposes, and would consequently go to swell the amount of representation to which the Hindus would be entitled on a numerical basis. The total number of the so-called "depressed classes" has been variously estimated at from fifty to eighty-eight millions, and these, though returned as Hindus in the census, are for the most part men whose mere touch is regarded by the high-caste Hindu as pollution. The fact that there are parts of India in which it is not uncommon

to see a witness of a depressed class in a law-suit "standing about a hundred yards from the court so as not to defile the Brahman judge and pleaders, whilst a row of *peons*, or messengers, stationed between him and the court, hand on its questions to him and pass back his replies,"[1] is sufficient to indicate the depth of the gulf which yawns between the high-caste Hindu and his less fortunate brother, and to demonstrate the absurdity of the claim of the one to represent the other. It is obvious, therefore, that as long as these people are returned as Hindus, the proportionate representation of Hindus and Mohammedans cannot be fairly determined on a simple numerical basis.

The reason for the demand for a separate Mohammedan register is to be found in the fact that under a system of mixed electorates the Mohammedans have failed to secure real or adequate representation. "Under the system of election hitherto in force," wrote the Government of India in their Circular of 1907, "Hindus largely predominate in all, or almost all, the electorates, with the result that comparatively few Mohammedan members have been elected"; and they were able to point to the case of the United Provinces, where, in spite of the existence of a large and important Mohammedan community

[1] 'Times,' August 13, 1910.

approximating 7,000,000, no single Mohammedan had ever been elected to the Legislative Council. Here we have obviously an example of the difference in conditions which renders a system of popular election well adapted to the circumstances obtaining in a homogeneous western country like the United Kingdom, wholly unsuitable to India. The difference between Mohammedan and Hindu is not merely the difference between, let us say, Nonconformist and Roman Catholic; it is, as Mr Asquith very properly stated in the House of Commons, "not merely religious, but it cuts deep down not only into the traditions of an historic past, but into the habits and social customs of the people"; and it was because the Mohammedans felt that nothing short of separate election could secure to them the genuine representation of their interests, to which they felt that they were entitled, that they attached so much importance to their request.

Lord Minto, as has already been said, expressed his entire agreement with the Mohammedans in their two demands regarding representation as far back as October 1906, and gave them clearly to understand that they need have no further apprehension with regard to them. One would have imagined, therefore, that the question was closed, and that in this matter at least the Government had forestalled controversy by the public

announcement of a clear and irrevocable decision. Yet it is precisely over this very question that they made the most portentous muddle, and it was round this very point that controversy was allowed to rage most fiercely. The folly of the Government in inviting controversy by the adoption of a vacillating attitude, and their still greater folly in shaking the faith of the Mohammedans in the inviolability of their word, can best be illustrated by a simple review in chronological order of their successive pledges and recantations.

PLEDGE, October 1, 1906.—In replying to the deputation of Mohammedans already referred to, Lord Minto said:—

> "The pith of your address, as I understand it, is a claim that in any system of representation, whether it affects a municipality, a district board, or a legislative council, in which it is proposed to introduce or increase an electoral organisation, the Mohammedan community should be represented as a community, and you justly claim that your position should be estimated not merely on your numerical strength, but in respect to the political importance of your community and the service it has rendered to the Empire. *I am entirely in accord with you.*"

RECANTATION, November 27, 1908.—Lord Morley

suggests to the Government of India a plan of *mixed* electoral Colleges on a strictly numerical basis.

PLEDGE, February 3, 1909. — On the second reading of the India Councils Bill in the House of Lords, Lord Morley said:—

> "The Mohammedans demand three things. I had the pleasure of receiving a deputation from them, and I know very well what is in their minds. They demand the election of their own representatives to these councils in all the stages, just as in Cyprus, where, I think, the Mohammedans vote by themselves. . . . Secondly, they want a number of seats in excess of their numerical strength. *These two demands we are quite ready and intend to meet in full.*"

RECANTATION, April 19, 1909.—Mr Hobhouse, speaking for the Government, reads a telegram from the Viceroy as follows:—

> "The method [of election] proposed is simply that in general electorates, such as municipalities, district boards, and provincial councils, all sects and classes, including Mohammedans, *will vote together.*"

PLEDGE, April 26, 1909.—Mr Hobhouse, speaking for the Government, explains that the above telegram has been misunderstood, and after promising that every endeavour will be made to remove

any obstacles that may be found to lie in the way of the fulfilment of the Government's pledges, asserts that—

> "Wherever elections are found to be possible they will be conducted on the basis of separate representation for the Mohammedan community."

RECANTATION, May 4, 1909.—Lord Morley, in replying to Lord Curzon in the House of Lords, reads a telegram from the Viceroy as follows:—

> "I do not understand any Mohammedan here to claim concession suggested by Hobhouse—namely, that wherever elections are found possible they should be conducted on the basis of separate representation of the Mohammedan community. If interpreted literally, that would involve separate Mohammedan electorates within the various electorates proposed. . . . This is manifestly impracticable, and has never been suggested."

Truly an astonishing record. Besides being a recantation of the pledges given, this telegram is quite incomprehensible, since the Mohammedans have never ceased demanding what the Viceroy here declares has never been suggested—namely, "separate Mohammedan electorates within the various electorates proposed." The bewilderment created in the mind of the ordinary man by this

series of official utterances was probably surpassed by the effect produced in the minds of the Mohammedans themselves, and it is impossible not to sympathise with the pathetic plaint which runs through the following letter addressed by the Rajah of Mahamudabad, a Mohammedan of great position and influence, and a member of the Viceroy's Legislative Council, to the Viceroy:—

> "Your Excellency, from this plethora of statements I confess I emerge with my mind somewhat confused. It is difficult in this winding labyrinth to discover the pathway which leads to understanding, and I can safely state that the general state of feeling amongst the Mohammedans at the present time in regard to the question of their rights and privileges under the Reform Scheme, but especially in regard to the matter of a separate electorate, is one of utter confusion. They fear, however, that a great wrong is about to be inflicted upon them; that they are to be treated with an injustice wholly undeserved by them, and they are deeply disappointed. They are not politicians; they do not understand the language of diplomacy; they are a patient, loyal, God-fearing people, who have trusted in a solemn pledge given to them by their rulers, and who

ask for a sign that that pledge is about to be fulfilled."

On May the 25th, 1909, the India Councils Bill received the Royal assent and became the "India Councils Act, 1909," thus passing beyond the pale of Parliamentary criticism. Fortunately the Act itself was little more than a skeleton to be clothed later with flesh and blood in the shape of "Rules and Regulations." Fortunately, too, the drawing up of the "Rules and Regulations" was left to the discretion of the Local and Imperial Governments in India, with the result that the end originally aimed at by the Government of India—namely, the incorporation in the government of the country of the "landed aristocracy, the mercantile and industrial classes, and the great body of moderate men," appears, so far as can at present be judged, likely to be achieved. The apprehensions of the Mohammedans have been to a great extent dissipated, and they have gladly testified that "the arrangements finally made, though they may not fulfil the desires of different sections, ensure to the educated classes substantial participation in the administration and legislation of the country."[1] At the same time, the hope is still cherished that the promise which they believed to have been made to them, that

[1] Annual Report of the London Branch of the All-India Moslem League, 1910.

they should be granted a separate register in elections to all public bodies, may yet be fulfilled. Representations have again been made to the authorities, pointing out that "the application of the communal system of election to the municipalities and district boards is essential if cohesion and symmetry are to be given to the beneficent reforms with which the names of Lord Morley and Lord Minto will ever be greatly associated in the Indian mind. The composition of the district and municipal bodies helps to determine the elections to the Legislatures, and hence the adoption of the principle in the case of these local bodies is a necessary corollary of its application to the councils."[1] And finally, a salutary douche of cold water has been administered by the Viceroy to those ardent politicians who cherished the hope that out of the clash of conflicting opinions which resounded over the fashioning of the India Councils Act, 1909, might be evolved something in the nature of Parliamentary government for India. "We have distinctly maintained," he declared in the course of his speech at the opening of the New Imperial Legislative Council on January 25, 1910, "that representative government in its Western sense is totally inapplicable to the Indian Empire, and would be uncongenial

[1] Annual Report of the London Branch of the All-India Moslem League, 1910.

to the traditions of Eastern peoples—that Indian conditions do not admit of popular representation —that the safety and welfare of this country must depend on the supremacy of British administration—and that that supremacy can, in no circumstances, be delegated to any kind of representative Assembly.

"We have aimed at the reform and enlargement of our councils, but not at the creation of Parliaments. I emphasise what I have just said in view of the opinions to which advanced Indian politicians appear not infrequently to commit themselves."

CHAPTER XII.

SOME THOUGHTS ON INDIAN UNREST.

In the course of an admirable speech on India in the House of Commons on July 26 last (1910), Mr Montagu, while fully admitting the gravity of the movement against British rule on the part of certain sections of the population, expressed the opinion that "within the last six months there had been a considerable revulsion in our favour." This confession of faith was made deliberately and with transparent sincerity, and that it was well founded must be the earnest hope of all; yet it must be admitted that it would have carried greater conviction had it not been so frequently demonstrated that the official mind is habitually pervaded by an optimism which cannot be justified by the facts. The audacious murder of Inspector Shams-ul-Alam within the precincts of the High Court itself early in 1910 occurred within a week of the issue at Calcutta of encouraging assurances

to the effect that "the general situation was regarded as better than it had been for some time." While Lord Minto's assertion in January (1910), that he "believed the situation to be better than it was five years ago," was made on the very eve of the introduction of the most drastic Press act which modern India has known—a fact which in itself provides a somewhat curious commentary upon the hopeful optimism of the Viceroy's belief. One would scarcely be entitled to express surprise were some captious critic to ask, If the improved situation demanded the Press act of 1910, what sort of a Press act *ought* to have been passed five years before?

It is obviously a matter of no ordinary difficulty to gauge correctly the precise state of ferment in which a complex society like that with which we have to deal in India may be at any given moment; but even assuming that "the situation is better than it was five years ago," and that there has been "a considerable revulsion in our favour within the last six months," we are still constrained to admit that, judged merely by appearances, the general state of the body politic gives little enough cause for premature rejoicing. Consider some of the more notorious of the doings of the forces of disorder during the last eighteen months alone.

In November 1909 a bomb was thrown at

the Viceroy at Ahmedabad, and the perpetrator of this outrage remains undetected and at large.

In December, Mr Jackson, a civil servant whose relations with the native population were notoriously good, was foully murdered at Nasik; and spurred into activity by this particularly revolting crime, the police discovered extensive stores of concealed arms and ammunition, not only in Nasik, but throughout the Deccan, and simultaneously in various districts of Bengal; and as illustrative of Anglo-Indian opinion on the situation, the 'Pioneer' declared that—"over a large part of the country every magistrate and judge who does his duty carries his life in his hand." The murder of Inspector Shams-ul-Alam has already been mentioned. In the spring a revival of political agitation in Eastern Bengal necessitated the proclaiming of various districts under the "Seditious Meetings Act."

For a brief spell in the early summer the country enjoyed comparative freedom from open outrage and assassination; but early in July news came to hand of a murderous attack upon an Indian gentleman, Kamalish Rai, uncle of the Rajah of Naldanga, who was believed to have given information to the police against political agitators; further discoveries of concealed arms and ammunition were made in Calcutta; and during the first week in August, a number of

arrests were effected in the capital and Dacca, included among them being Pulin Behari Das, a recently released deportee. Finally, it was asserted that the discovery of a mass of letters and documents in conjunction with the arrests had confirmed the opinion of the authorities that they had unearthed "a far-reaching and active conspiracy for the subversion of British rule affecting every province in India."[1] For some months past, it is true, there has been no fresh outbreak of anarchical crime, and it is to be devoutly hoped — though it would be rash to assert — that this phase of Indian unrest has passed never to return. But anarchical crime is merely one symptom of a state of unhealth, and the disappearance — even if it has finally taken place — of a single symptom by no means signifies that all cause for anxiety has gone. Indian unrest in its wider aspect will not disappear in a day; and it is well to make some attempt to understand the real character of the problem with which we have to deal.

We are face to face in India with serious discontent and consequent disturbance produced by a state of mental unrest on the part of a small fraction of the population. This mental fever is in the main responsible for two distinct phenomena — first, a vague movement against constituted authority and in the direction of representative

[1] 'Times' Dacca Correspondent, August 7, 1910.

government; and second, the growth of a spirit of racial antagonism and consequent agitation against Western domination.

That is the situation, and its origin is of a far more complex character than is sometimes supposed—at any rate, by those who have given nothing more than a passing thought to the matter. I remember on one occasion hearing it suggested in the House of Commons by a gentleman who had once held the office of Under Secretary for India, that the difficulties which had grown up in that country were attributable to the acts and speeches of Lord Curzon. Any such suggestion shows an entire inability to appreciate either the character or the origin of the present unrest. No one man, however powerful his personality and however far-reaching his influence,—and I should be the last to deny either the commanding personality or the vast influence of Lord Curzon,—can be said to be in any way responsible for the present state of affairs. Its causes lie far deeper, and may in the main be divided into two classes—namely, those which are predisposing to unrest, and secondly, those which have an exciting effect when acting upon material already predisposed to respond. Let us consider for a moment the former.

In the first place, we have as a predisposing cause of mental unrest many years of contact between the cold, mechanical, and inexorably

logical mind of the West and the contemplative, imaginative, introspective mind of the East. In our contact with Eastern races, and especially in our efforts to educate them, we have endeavoured to force upon them the morality, the ideals —the whole mode of thought, indeed, of the West. They have shown extraordinary aptitude in acquiring the language, the literature, and the science of Europe, and the profound mistake which is too often made by the doctrinaire is to imagine because the Oriental acts and speaks as a European, that therefore he thinks as one. He does not. His whole outlook upon life is different.[1] The evolution of the Eastern races and of those of the West has not proceeded along parallel but along divergent lines. The ideals after which they respectively grope and the goals to which they have so far attained are separated by generations of men and by centuries of time. The results of contact under such circumstances are now being revealed, and I do not think that I shall meet with serious denial if I say that one of the results has been to imbue a certain section of the Indian peoples with an unnatural desire for a form of government for which they have no aptitude either by instinct or by tradition, and which is in fact wholly alien to that particular form of social structure which is

[1] I am, of course, aware of the existence of exceptions to this generalisation.

the product of the distinctive genius of the peoples of the East.

In the second place, the Eastern races have admitted, grudgingly perhaps but still implicitly, the superiority of Europe in mechanical ability—in the invention and perfection of ships and guns, and of the whole gamut of appliances which have revolutionised the conduct of war; and it is largely because they have done so that they have acquiesced in Western domination. In other words, one of Europe's most efficacious weapons in governing Asiatic races has been prestige. I know well that this assertion will bring me into conflict with the doctrinaire. He is disposed to ridicule the value of prestige. But the doctrinaire is wrong. He is pitting his theories against the universal experience of those upon whose shoulders has fallen the task of governing Oriental races on the spot, and nothing that the doctrinaire may say can alter the fact that it is largely owing to prestige that Great Britain, with a trifling force of 70,000 white troops and a handful of English civilians, successfully controls a population of 300,000,000, scattered over the vast extent of a whole continent.

But the belief in the superiority of Europe in this direction has been rudely shaken during recent years. As the tale of victory for an Eastern Power over a Western Power was told

with dramatic effect on the plains of Manchuria, the pulse of hostility to Western domination throbbed with new vigour throughout Asia. What Japan had done India could do, so doubtless argued many;[1] and had discontent with Western rule permeated the masses, the world might well have been involved in a racial war of incalculable dimensions and of cataclysmal consequences. It is, however, precisely the masses who benefit beyond computation from British rule, and a revolt on any large scale is an eventuality which we are fortunately not at present called upon to contemplate.

Nevertheless, the effect of these two processes—namely, long contact between minds of wholly different type and structure, and the growing belief on the part of Eastern races in their ability to successfully meet the races of the West with their own weapons—has been to create an atmosphere of unrest. Unfortunately they are causes with which it is obviously be-

[1] There is, of course, in reality no analogy between Japan and India. The former consists of a small, compact, homogeneous people inspired by a burning patriotism to an Emperor of their own race, the representative of a dynasty whose origin is lost in the legendary mists of antiquity. The latter consists of a heterogeneous congeries of peoples of different race whose manners, customs, religions, and languages have nothing in common; and who, far from possessing any centre upon which to focus either loyalty or patriotism, apart from the King-Emperor, have in the past been immersed in incessant and mutually destructive strife.

yond our power to interfere, though it is only by subjecting them to examination that it becomes at all possible to form any opinion as to the character and extent of the effect which they are likely to produce. But are there no causes predisposing to unrest with which it may still be found possible to deal? Undoubtedly there are, and foremost among them must be placed the unsatisfactory nature of our educational system. Let me touch upon one aspect only of the educational question—namely, that which is presented by the system of University education which we have set up.

In India teaching is not undertaken by the university itself, but is left to colleges which are affiliated to the university and which are scattered over vast areas. Thus the Calcutta university serves the immense area of Bengal, Burma, and Assam,—an area, that is to say, of 459,000 square miles, with a population of upwards of 92,000,000, while the Madras University possesses affiliated colleges in Ceylon. Under the provisions of comparatively recent legislation (1904) the universities systematically inspect the colleges to see that the conditions of affiliation are fulfilled, and they have also acquired teaching powers; but these latter have not so far been developed, and to all intents and purposes the university remains to-day what it

has been in the past—namely, little more than an examining board.

Examination is no doubt one of the most important functions which a university is called upon to exercise; but as long as the university continues to be merely an examining board and nothing more, and as long as the sole ambition of the university student is to commit to memory sufficient matter to enable him to pass an examination which will secure for him salaried employment, so long will the system continue to produce a type of humanity peculiarly susceptible to disaffection and discontent. But can it be denied that such is the case now? Picture for a moment the career of the average student aiming at a university degree. He has to attend a *minimum* of 1120 lectures; and he does so willingly, because this is the only form in which instruction is imparted to him. The hours during which he is not engaged in attending lectures are spent in committing to memory the notes which he has made. His intellectual life, in other words, becomes one long, hideous, mechanical grind. And what of his physical surroundings? He resides, in all probability, in a lodging in the slums of a crowded city. Of the social side which forms so marked a feature of university life in the West he knows nothing. No salutary moral influences are brought to bear upon the formation of his

character, and such morality as he acquires is merely, as a recent writer has well said, "a morality which is enjoined by the criminal law or is supported by calculation."[1] And just as no moral influence is brought to bear upon the formation of his character, so no physical exercise in the shape of athletics, or indeed in any other shape, is provided to promote the health of his body. At fifteen he is quite likely to be married; at twenty-one he is more than likely to be. Under these conditions and amid these surroundings, poorly fed, peculiarly open to the attack of disease, overwrought in mind and body, he struggles for his degree. The 18,000 students at college provide an annual output of little more than 1900 B.A.'s. What become of the thousands who fall out by the way? Is it to be wondered at if, with their physical strength undermined, without moral stamina, soured by disappointment, they fall an easy prey to disaffection and discontent?

Let us admit, at once, that something is being done to remedy this state of affairs, and let us render our tribute of praise to those who have tried, and who are still endeavouring, to grapple with the evils of the system. Residential colleges are being encouraged, and something in the nature of corporate life among the students is being

[1] Sir Bampfylde Fuller.

aimed at; but at present only 4000 of the 18,000 university students live in collegiate buildings, and though this shows an increase of 70 per cent for the quinquennium ending 1907 over the previous five years, we have very far to travel before we even come in sight of the ideal Indian university as depicted in the report of the Commission on Calcutta colleges. And in view of the fact that the vast majority of the anarchists who have so far come before the courts for trial have been young men of the student class, we are constrained to recognise that as far as a large part, at any rate, of the annual output of our universities is concerned, we are providing the makings of serious trouble in the future. It must be confessed that lack of funds and the extreme difficulty of securing men of the right type, who will throw themselves body and soul into the task of training and teaching students in the Indian universities, are formidable articles in the path of reform; but they are obstacles on the surmounting of which it will well pay British statesmanship to concentrate the full force of its energy and its genius. Mr Justice Asutosh Mukerjee was surely right when he said that not until we have succeeded in creating in India "truly residential colleges of the type so familiar in the universities of the West" can we expect to see "a growth of corporate life among the students,"

or to be able to truthfully describe our colleges as "corporations of teachers and students banded together for the promotion of learning."

Unrest is doubtless a wide term, and I am not unmindful of the economic forces which are at play in India as elsewhere, and which are responsible for unrest in some of its phases. Increase in the cost of living is likely to create resentment, and failing any other convenient object against which to display annoyance, the Government provides the necessary target. The fiscal policy, too, which has been imposed by Great Britain upon a most unwilling India, is a genuine cause of grievance upon which something is said elsewhere. But sufficient cause has already been shown for the existence of an atmosphere of unrest, and without further elaboration under this head, we may pass on to a consideration of some of those causes which I have described as "having an exciting effect when acting upon material already predisposed to respond." But before doing so I desire to make it quite clear that I am not in any way reflecting, in anything which I may have to say, upon those who have for some time past entertained a very natural and a perfectly legitimate desire to enjoy the fruit of the training and education which we have deliberately given them, by taking a greater part in the government and administration of the country. It was for

these men that the reform scheme which culminated in the India Councils Act of 1909 was devised and put into force. The present source of trouble is not to be found among these men. An educated class possessed of very proper ambitions and aspirations is a perfectly legitimate child of the ferment of ideas brought about under the circumstances already detailed. But there has been brought into existence, and fostered, an illegitimate offspring in the "rapidly growing minority" which has formed itself into "a physical force party, whose programme is to stir up disorder and have recourse to every practicable form of violence, because it regards any disorder or misery, or even anarchy itself, as preferable to the presence of the foreigner in the land."[1] It is these men who are the promoters of sedition and the instigators of anarchy, and who adopt every device that their ingenuity can contrive for working upon the feelings of their highly impressionable fellow-countrymen. Platform oratory and a seditious press are the chief weapons which they employ, and which act as the excitants to which I have referred.

Many examples might be given of the way in which the mind of the youth of India is poisoned by the insidious teaching of the seditious press. Let one suffice. The following was addressed by

[1] The Hon. G. K. Gokhale, Nov. 30, 1908.

a young student to the publishers of the newspaper 'Jugantar' (New Era) :—

"SIR,—From your advertisement, articles, and your bold writings, I understand that he alone who has the subversion of the Firingee [British] Government at heart should by all means read the 'Jugantar.' I, a school-boy living in a hilly country, don't feel any oppression of the Firingees, and I give way before people for want of information. I am therefore in need of 'Jugantar.' For it acquaints us to a great extent with the devices of driving away the Firingees, and also makes us alive to wrongs. I am extremely in straitened circumstances, hardly able to procure one meal a-day; nevertheless my desire for newspaper reading is extremely strong. Hence I approach you as a beggar. Ah! do not disappoint such an eager hope of mine. Please grant my prayer. . . . Further, please don't fail to send a sample copy."

Consider for a moment the second sentence in this illuminating document. Here was a school-boy living in blissful ignorance of the fact (*sic*) that he was being trampled under foot by a tyrannous and unscrupulous Government. He was therefore in need of 'Jugantar.' Why? Because by reading it alone would he be "made alive to wrongs." Can any steps for the suppression of an evil of this kind be too drastic? "We cannot look on passively at the progressive demoralisation of the youth of India," observed Sir Herbert Risley on the introduction of the long overdue Press Bill in February 1910; but that

is precisely what the Indian Government had been doing, on their own showing, for months past. As far back as November 1907 Sir E. Baker, then a member of the Government of India, had declared that it was "a matter of common knowledge that there was a section of the press which openly endeavoured to excite hatred of the Government and advocated its subversion," and he frankly admitted that "during the last two or three years . . . these organs had increased in numbers, in circulation, and in the virulence and audacity of their attacks on the established order." Yet it was not apparently until 1910 that it occurred to the Government that they "could not look on passively at the progressive demoralisation of the youth of India!"

The fatal optimism to which I felt compelled to draw attention at the beginning of this chapter has clogged the wheels of the executive machine, and it is greatly to be feared that this optimism has not infrequently served as a cloak to shelter timidity—timidity in framing the necessary measures, and timidity in putting them into force when at last framed. It is difficult to decide whether the spectacle presented by Sir Harvey Adamson complaining of the Seditious Meetings Act of 1907, that it was "unfortunately surrounded by safeguards which rendered it somewhat difficult to be put into operation on sudden and isolated occa-

sions," is pathetic or ludicrous. In view of the fact that he was himself responsible for the measure, most people will probably be inclined to decide upon the latter. Nor, to take another case, do the Government appear to have been very successful in their praiseworthy attempts to lubricate the wheels of the ponderous chariot of justice. The "Summary Justice Act" of 1908 was designed to provide among other things for "the more ready trial of certain offences"—a genuine "long-felt want" when it is recalled that some of the persons arrested in connection with the Manicktollah Conspiracy only had their ultimate fate decided on appeal nearly two years after they first fell into the hands of the police. Yet Kanare, the assassin of Mr Jackson, who committed the crime on December the 21st, 1909, was only executed on April the 19th, 1910—a delay which scarcely suggests the word "summary." Sardar Partab Singh undoubtedly gave expression to the feelings of many loyal Indians when he complained that "the prolongation of proceedings in criminal cases had become a public scandal," and he might have added that retribution rapid and relentless is essential if evil-doers are to be deterred.

But to return to the root of so much of the present evil—namely, a poisonous and unbridled Press. What excuse can the Government urge for allowing the evil to attain to its present in-

tolerable proportions before attempting to deal with it? It is no secret that the Central Government were pressed to take action—and refused—long before February 1910. They did not consider the matter urgent, was their reply. In view of this attitude a brief examination of the official defence of the Press Bill when at length introduced may not be without interest. Take, for example, the speech of Sir Herbert Risley on the introduction of the Bill:—

> . . . We see the most influential and most widely read portion of the Indian Press incessantly occupied in rendering the Government by law established odious in the sight of the Indian people.
>
> Every day the Press proclaims openly, or by suggestion or allusion, that the only cure for the ills of India is independence from foreign rule, independence to be won by heroic deeds, by self-sacrifice, martyrdom on the part of the young, in any case by some form of violence.

And again:—

> We are at the present moment confronted with a murderous conspiracy, whose aim it is to subvert the Government of the country and to make British rule impossible by establishing general terrorism. Their organisation is effective and far-reaching; their numbers are believed to be considerable; the leaders work in secret and are blindly obeyed by their youthful followers. The method they favour at present is political assassination.

To which let me add the opinion of so prominent

a member of the forward political school in India as Mr Gokhale :—

> It is not merely the assassinations that have taken place, or the conspiracies that have come to light, or the political dacoities that are being committed, that fill me with anxiety. The air in many places is still thick with ideas that are undoubtedly antagonistic to the unquestioned continuance of British rule.

Does the air become "thick with ideas" in a day? And is not the whole official defence of the Bill the most damning indictment of their incomprehensible delay? Can it be held for a moment that the situation as sketched by Sir Herbert Risley had not urgently called for action for months past? Lord Morley once preached a little sermon for the especial benefit of those who "talk nonsense about apathy and supineness," and who were urging him to curtail the licence extended to Indian political orators and the Indian press. "We are representatives," he said, "not of Oriental civilisation but of Western civilisation, of its methods, its principles, its practices; and I for one will not be hurried into an excessive haste for repression by the argument that Orientals do not understand patience and toleration."[1] Lord Morley has kept his promise; and Sir Herbert Risley and Mr Gokhale have described the result.

[1] Speech at Arbroath, October 21, 1907.

And what of the Bill itself? Its main provision requires that in addition to the declaration before a magistrate required by the "Press and Registration of Books Act, 1876," a deposit of not less than 500 Rs. and not more than 2000 Rs. shall be made by any intending publisher or owner of a press, unless the magistrate thinks fit to dispense with such deposit. On conviction of an offence against the Act the deposit may be ordered by the Local Government to be forfeited, and a further deposit of not less than 1000 Rs. and not more than 10,000 Rs. demanded. On the commission of a second offence both the deposit and the press are liable to confiscation. Existing owners and publishers are not called upon to make any deposit until accused of offending against the Act, and in all cases an appeal to a special tribunal of the High Court is allowed. The Customs officials are empowered to detain packages imported and suspected of containing seditious literature, and the postal authorities suspected articles *other than letters or parcels*. The italics are mine. What a fatuous exception! Literature, no matter how seditious, may be sent under cover of letter or parcel, and the postal authorities shall touch it at their peril!

The clause is a most unfortunate example of the flabbiness of the Government. That they thought it necessary to give the postal author-

ities full power to detain any suspected matter is obvious from the fact that such powers were accorded in the Bill as originally presented by them. Why, then, did they allow their clause to be erased? If they did not believe the clause to be necessary, why did they ever insert it in their Bill? If, on the other hand, they did believe it to be necessary it was an exhibition of intolerable weakness to give it up. Cannot they understand that in vital matters of this kind timidity and deference to their opponents will, far from conciliating them, merely invite their contempt, while it will most assuredly tend to alienate their friends? The words of the Rajah of Kurupam were significant when, speaking as a member of the Viceroy's Council, he adverted to the "astonishing patience" of the Government, and declared that "it was the long-suffering shown by them . . . that had been construed into weakness, and undue and hostile advantage had been taken of the same."

It is notorious that some of the most mischievous of the literature which is poisoning the minds of Indian youths at the present time is being printed and published in Europe and America and sent into India by post. To my certain knowledge the 'Tulwar' or 'Sword' is finding its way to India through the letter post. With the suppression of the 'Bande Mataram' in Calcutta, a journal bearing the same name

appeared in Geneva. Its *raison d'être* was frankly stated in its first issue in September 1909 to be the "continuance, commemoration, and consolidation of the work that was inaugurated by that redoubtable champion of Indian freedom the 'Bande Mataram' of Calcutta." A few extracts will suffice to show the pitiful stuff of which it is composed:—

> The *débris* of the old *régime* must be removed. And the only agent that can accomplish this is the sword. No subject nation can win freedom without war—without a war to the knife with its alien rulers.

After having congratulated itself on having "thrown the Administration into a panic" it goes on to pass an encomium upon Dhingra, the murderer of Sir Curzon Wyllie:—

> Dhingra has found out the secret of life: he has discovered the path of immortality. He has realised the highest destiny of man. He has lifted himself above the common run of men and joined the company of saints and heroes.

Finally, its attitude towards law and order is set forth:—

> In our work for the triumph of Justice and Truth we never take account of laws enacted by our enemies. . . . The laws of British India are no more binding on us than the laws of Matabeleland. . . . As far as we are concerned they simply exist not, or exist only to be defied and violated at the call of duty.

Pitiful stuff indeed! But sufficiently mischievous, unfortunately, when acting upon the mind of the impressionable Indian student. Both the 'Bande Mataram' and Mr Krishnavarma's 'Indian Sociologist,' which excited some attention in England by preaching the doctrine that "political assassination was not murder," are of a size which is easily inserted in an ordinary envelope, and it is hardly likely that the astute engineers of the seditious movement will fail to take advantage of the secure and easy channel which the Government have left open to them in the shape of the penny post. If any doubt be entertained as to that, the following extract from a later issue of the 'Bande Mataram' should suffice to dispose of it:—

> The circulation of revolutionary leaflets, journals, and manifestoes should be looked upon as a sacred duty by all patriots. Let us look upon every leaf of revolutionary literature with almost superstitious veneration, and try to make it reach India by all means in our power.

It must be said in extenuation of what may euphemistically be called the caution shown by the Government of India in administering drastic remedies, that any vigorous action which they take is instantly assailed by a stream of hostile and virulent criticism from a certain quarter of the House of Commons. The little party composed of Labour members and Radicals of an ultra-

visionary type who have made a speciality of criticising British rule in India, have been guilty of almost inconceivable folly in reviling those who are engaged in maintaining law and order in that country. In England, where the majority of those who take any interest in Imperial affairs are capable of discriminating between members of Parliament, a campaign of this sort is merely foolish, and can be appraised at its true value. Unfortunately, the native of India is not capable of so discriminating, nor does he realise how abysmal are the depths of ignorance of Indian conditions on the part of many of those who dogmatise in the House of Commons upon Indian affiairs; and what is in itself mere folly becomes fraught with mischief when reported in India. The extremists are led to believe that they have the support of an influential section of the British Parliament, and are encouraged in the evil of their ways, while the task of the British administrator is rendered infinitely harder. They denounce the Press Act of the Indian Government, and declare that India should be governed in accordance with Indian ideas. That they are childishly ignorant of Indian ideas does not apparently occur to them. "When you came into India, the characteristic of Indian thought," said Mr Montagu, "was an excessive reverence for authority"; and he might have added that the reason for this

characteristic was to be found in the fact that Indian rulers took care that their authority was respected. A law or ordinance should, according to Indian ideas, be so drafted as to secure the object desired, regardless of whether such law or ordinance might or might not violate the eternal principles of some theoretical doctrine of liberty as propounded by the philosophers and doctrinaires. The recently enacted Press Act of Mysore—one of the most progressive of Native States, and one, moreover, which is held up by Mr Keir Hardie as a shining example of what a well-managed Indian State ought to be—may confidently be commended to the critics of our own Indian administration as an admirable example of legislation in accordance with Indian ideas. It is therein laid down with delightful simplicity that no printed work containing public news or comments on public news shall be edited, printed, or published in Mysore without permission of the Maharajah, and that such permission may be at any time withdrawn by the Government. The fact of the matter is, that the ideals of democracy as set forth by its present-day apostles in England, far from being in accordance with Indian ideas, are wholly alien to them. The extent to which liberty of criticism and free speech is tolerated in England is incomprehensible to the Indian mind. It was perplexing to the mind,

declared the Maharajah of Burdwan, in the course of a speech on the Indian Press Bill, "that while the Government takes active measures for putting down sedition in India, it allows a Labour member, in the shape of Mr Keir Hardie, to have the audacity to say that 'the time had come for the crown to be thrown into the melting-pot.'" And so entirely out of harmony with Indian thought are ideas of this kind, that he urged that steps should be taken to safeguard India from further samples of this type of Western rhetoric. "I beg to point out that the time has come to seriously consider whether we are to allow India to be made the dumping-ground of Western politics, political thoughts, and socialism."

If the Labour Party and their sympathisers are sincere in their desire to promote the best interests of the Indian peoples, why do they not devote some part of the energy which they at present reserve for criticising British administration and feeding the fires of political unrest to the far harder but infinitely more praiseworthy task of advocating much-needed social reforms. To urge social reform in India demands courage, since it cuts deep into the roots of Hindu caste prejudice. It was on the rock of social reform that the Brahmo Somaj practically wrecked itself. Yet a little band of reformers, led by men like Mr Chandavarkar, who place the good of their country

above easily acquired political notoriety, courageously perseveres in the thankless task of urging upon their countrymen the abolition of child marriage, sanction of the re-marriage of widows, temperance and morality, and training for industrial and commercial careers. The task of laying the axe at the root of immemorial custom is one which at best is rewarded with apathy or suspicion, and is more likely to bring down upon the heads of those who undertake it unpopularity and loud-voiced hostility; yet this, surely, can scarcely be held to account for the fact that upon topics of such vast importance the self-styled "friends of India" in the House of Commons—"politicians," as Lord Morley has it, "of generous but unbalanced impulse"—maintain so strange a silence!

There is one more factor of incalculable importance in the situation as it exists in India to-day. It is not too much to say that upon the efficiency and calibre of the Indian Civil Service depends the successful continuance of British rule. It is upon the shoulders of the District Officer that the responsibility of Great Britain's vast inheritance falls with greatest weight. Personal rule is what the masses in India are accustomed to, and what they understand and desire. Never was there a time when it was of greater importance that the Indian Civil Service should attract to itself the

flower of English manhood. Yet it is precisely at this juncture that it is being realised that the attractiveness of the service has undergone a disconcerting set-back. The Chancellor of Oxford University has recently commented upon the falling-off in the number of Oxford men taking the highest places in examination who select an Indian career. This is a serious matter, and demands the most careful attention. There are no doubt various causes which have contributed to the waning popularity of the Service. Pay has fallen in value; pensions do not go as far as they did; the officials have not the same power and authority as formerly, and they are overburdened with the mass of clerical work which they have to get through. But above all there is a feeling that in the discharge of the difficult and onerous duties which fall to their lot they cannot count upon the support of those in authority to the same extent as formerly. How far such an impression is justified I am not in a position to say; but of this there is no doubt, that whatever want of confidence may be felt in the attitude of the Government is enormously stimulated by the knowledge that not only individual action, but the action of Government both in India and at home, is subject to a stream of suspicious and hostile criticism in the House of Commons. It would

indeed be astonishing if under these circumstances young men with a choice of career before them were not to ask themselves whether exile from home amid all the discomforts and disadvantages of an Indian climate, with the not too remote chance of assassination, were good enough. The position of responsibility which falls to the young Indian civilian at a comparatively early age no doubt weighs heavily against the drawbacks of the Service with many, while the possibility of attaining to place and power holds out a dazzling appeal to the ambitious. But only within the last few weeks the young Indian civilian has seen the men of his own Service passed over, and one of the highest appointments under the Crown in India handed over to a junior member of the English Civil Service,[1] and again he asks himself, are the exile and the drawbacks worth the while?

It is not for a moment suggested that with an open competitive examination in place of nomination — the system which has now been in force for more that half a century — any difficulty will be experienced in filling the Service, even if its attractiveness undergoes further decline. But the danger is that the Service will gradually cease to attract the right class of men. Some comment is even now being made

[1] See Appendix III.

upon the deportment of some of the younger members of the Service towards the natives of India. Reported cases of incivility and discourtesy are becoming more frequent. "Bad manners," as Lord Morley has said, "are disagreeable in all countries: India is the only country where bad and overbearing manners are a political crime."[1] Some change is contemplated in the rules as to age and probation of candidates for the Indian Civil Service, with a view to extending the period of probation from one to two years. Such a change will be all to the good, since one year is admittedly too short a time for the specialised study which a probationer has to take up to fit himself for his life and duties in India. But no extension of the period devoted to special studies can make up for any existing lack of breeding, and it can never be reiterated with too much emphasis that no one resents being governed by a man who is not a gentleman more keenly than an Indian. Far be it from me to suggest that the Indian Civil Service suffers from an undue proportion of black sheep. Such a suggestion would be entirely contrary to my belief. But I have had brought to my notice cases of gross affront offered by members of the Service to Indian gentlemen of birth and position, and it is be-

[1] Speech at Arbroath, Oct. 21, 1907.

cause I am impressed with the truth of Lord Morley's dictum that in India bad manners are "a political crime," and because I believe that any serious falling-off from the high standard of excellence for which the Indian Civil Service has always been known would constitute something like an Imperial disaster, that I have ventured to unburden my mind upon so difficult and so delicate a matter.

CHAPTER XIII.

INDIA AND IMPERIAL RECIPROCITY.

It is sometimes said that although a tariff might be advantageous in the case of a country like the United States of America, with its immense area and its vast and varied stores of raw material, the contrary must be the case with the United Kingdom, with its strictly circumscribed area, and with supplies of raw material necessarily limited in both quantity and kind. Such an argument ignores the principles lying at the root of the policy of Imperial Reciprocity which refuses to regard the British Empire as a mere agglomeration of water-tight compartments, but on the contrary insists upon regarding it as a composite whole. Looked at in this light, it becomes immediately apparent that the variety and extent of the natural resources massed within the confines of a future British zollverein are without parallel either in the United States of America or in any other country. In his dominions in the

East alone the King Emperor possesses a treasure-house of raw material of incalculable value, for which reason, if for no other, it would be folly to leave India out of account in any scheme of Imperial Reciprocity. But India has other claims to a respectful hearing based upon the fact that, the United Kingdom apart, she can show an overseas trade far greater in volume and in value than can any other portion of the Empire.

These are the mere economic reasons for the inclusion of India in any general scheme providing for an Imperial Customs Union. But there are also political reasons for doing so. The political economy of the Manchester school has never possessed any attractions for the people of India, who have, indeed, scant cause for burning incense at its shrines. They can never forget that it was in the sacred name of Free Trade that they were compelled to impose an excise duty on the most successful of their modern industries; and there are few movements of greater significance than the steady growth of public opinion in that country in favour of protection. The Indian view has been recently dispassionately summed up by a prominent member of the Viceroy's Council in these words:—

Nowadays we hear a good deal of Tariff Reform; there is a swinging back of the pendulum in free trade England. Why cannot the people of this country hope for a share in

that reform when it comes? . . . There is a general feeling in favour of protection in this country; a judicious protective tariff is demanded by intelligent public opinion in the interest of the undeveloped industries. Can the Government disregard this opinion long with either justice or advantage?[1]

The question seems to be a pertinent one. The Government have been taking no little credit to themselves for having given Indian opinion louder expression in the government of the country by means of the India Councils Act of 1909. Can they, then, with justice continue to ignore the clearly expressed opinion which they have invited? And when it is recalled that the desire for protection is so strong in India that, denied the ordinary means of satisfaction provided by a tariff, it has already assumed the undesirable shape of a boycott of foreign goods, there are seen to be substantial grounds for Mr Dadabhoy's further doubts as to the possibility of the Government continuing to ignore public opinion "with advantage."

Do not let us disguise from ourselves the fact that it is protection for India against all competitors—including the United Kingdom—that is demanded. "Swadeshi" in other words is a national movement in so far as the word "national" may be properly used of India, and predicates protection for home industries. A tariff does not possess the terrors for the educated Indian

[1] Mr Dadabhoy, March 29, 1910.

that it does for the English Free Trader. The small increases in certain of the Indian Customs duties recently authorised by the Government were described somewhat contemptuously by Sir Sassoon David as "chow chow or peddling," while on another occasion Mr Gokhale reminded the Government that the Indian duties once stood at 7½ per cent, and bluntly asserted that there was no reason why they should not do so again. The question, then, that arises is this—is it possible to convert what is at present a purely national movement into Imperial channels? In other words, would a scheme of tariff reciprocity between India and the United Kingdom go any way towards meeting the desires of India for fiscal change? There can be little doubt that such a scheme could be devised as would at least be regarded as preferable to the existing system, and which, quite apart from political considerations, would be of practical benefit to both countries.

It is sometimes argued that the Government of India in their despatch upon the subject in 1903 came to no such conclusion; that their memorandum was, indeed, entirely unfavourable to any policy of reciprocity between India and other parts of the Empire. Even if this were so, it does not follow that what was written in 1903 is applicable in 1911. As a matter of fact, there

is nothing in the memorandum in question to support the contention that the Government of India would have been unwilling to discuss proposals for reciprocal trade concessions. On the contrary, what they pointed out was that they had no definite scheme before them for their consideration, and that "to determine whether on *a priori* grounds it would be to our advantage or the reverse to declare our adhesion to or dissent from a general policy not clearly defined, would not be altogether easy or conclusive." Nevertheless, they considered that the attempt should be made, and after discussing the question from various points of view, concluded as follows:—

Firstly—"That without any such system, India already enjoys a large, probably an exceptionally large, measure of the advantages of the free exchange of imports and exports."

Secondly—"That if the matter is regarded exclusively from an economic standpoint, India has something, but not perhaps very much, to offer to the Empire; that she has very little to gain in return; and that she has a great deal to lose or to risk."

Thirdly—"That in a financial aspect, the danger to India of reprisals by foreign nations, even if eventually unsuccessful, is

> so serious, and their results would be so disastrous, that we should not be justified in embarking on any new policy of the kind unless assured of benefits greater and more certain than any which have so far presented themselves to our mind."

These three conclusions invite some comment. Number one does not appear to have any very great bearing on the question. It is true that later on in their despatch the Government of India lay stress upon the advantage with which India might make use of a tariff for purposes of negotiation and retaliation. "In Japan," they write, "both our indigo and our saltpetre are subject to unfavourable treatment, and the representations which we have constantly urged the Secretary of State to make on our behalf have hitherto borne no fruit. The knowledge that Japanese matches and silk are in any case secure of equal treatment in India has possibly not been without its effect in producing this barren result." And again, "All that we seek is that we shall not be pledged in advance to accord equal treatment to the imports of all countries alike, irrespective of whether they penalise our exports or not." From which it appears that they were disposed to think that if allowed greater freedom of action in fiscal matters, they could obtain further advantages

for Indian trade. In other words, they distinctly declare for a policy of retaliation. But why it should be imagined that adhesion to a scheme of Imperial preferential tariffs should stand in the way of their adoption of a policy of retaliation against foreign countries is not apparent.

When we consider the second of their three conclusions, we find that great developments have taken place in the conditions of Indian trade since 1903. There were at that time, as the Government of India themselves admitted, imports of the value of £10,000,000 in which "effective competition" prevailed, and in respect of which "a substantial preferential tariff against the foreigner would be of material benefit to the British manufacturer." For the five years ending 1902-3 the value of foreign goods imported into India averaged only £12,000,000. Since that time the value of her foreign imports has risen by leaps and bounds, and has now reached the figure of £23,500,000. In spite of the obviously advantageous position which our own traders must enjoy in the world's competition for the Indian market, our foreign rivals continue to increase their trade at a very much greater rate than we do. Thus we find—to take the case of the trade in which we have always possessed an absolutely overwhelming preponderance—that "during the last ten years while the import

of cotton goods into India from Lancashire has (with certain fluctuations) done little more than hold its own, while the production of Indian cotton mills has only approximately doubled itself, the imports from Japan, Germany, and other protected foreign countries have been multiplied fourfold."[1] It appears, therefore, that there is now a far wider field in which "effective competition prevails" than there was in 1903, and that a preference which would admittedly have been of "material benefit to the British manufacturer" at that time, would *pro tanto* be of increased benefit now. Nor did the particular proposals for preferential trade examined by the Government of India exhaust the possibilities of the case, as will appear later on.

Of the last of the three conclusions it must be observed that the fear of reprisals by foreign nations therein expressed does not accord with the belief in the efficacy of retaliation set forth in a later portion of the same despatch. Nor, indeed, does any fear of the kind seem to have deterred the Indian Government from actually attacking foreign countries with fiscal weapons in the past. When in 1897-98 the Indian sugar industry was being threatened by the rapid increase in the importation of bounty-fed beet

[1] Sir R. Lethbridge, K.C.I.E., in the 'Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review' for January 1910.

sugar from the continent of Europe, the Indian Government examined the weapons in their armoury, and having decided that in a countervailing import duty they possessed an effective weapon, they proceeded to impose the same on the sugar of Germany, Austria, France, and indeed all other countries giving a bounty to their producers. In the speech of the Viceroy to his Council in support of such a policy I find, indeed, a delightful dig at the super-orthodox—if such a word be permissible,—but no suggestion of the "danger to India of reprisals by foreign nations," which forms the gist of the conclusion now under consideration. "I do not think," he said, "that we need pay much attention to the mutterings of the High Priests at the free trade shrines. Their oracles do not stand precisely at their original premium. This is not a question of economic orthodoxy or heterodoxy; it is a question of re-establishing a fiscal balance which has been deflected for their own advantage and to our injury by certain of our foreign competitors." And let me add again, even at the risk of becoming tedious, that the Government of India did not hesitate to re-establish the fiscal balance by having recourse to fiscal expedients regardless of the "danger of reprisals" by those affected.

As a disquisition on the merits of Reciprocity

the despatch is inconclusive, and a careful perusal of it as a whole suggests that, in their consideration of the subject, the Government of India were haunted by the fear that in event of India being committed in advance to adherence to some future scheme of Imperial preference, her interests would be subordinated to those of other parts of the Empire. It was, indeed, frankly admitted by Lord Curzon at a subsequent date that this was the case. "May I confess," he said, speaking in the House of Lords on May the 21st, 1908, "that our real apprehensions when drawing up the despatch about the fiscal future of India were not so much economic as political? We said to ourselves—'What guarantee should we have, if any new system were proposed, that India would have free speech in the discussion of the subject or a free judgment in its decision?'"

Now it cannot be denied that, judged by the test of past experience, the Government of India had every justification for their fears. The stormy and acrimonious controversy which raged round the Indian tariff in both England and India during the years of 1894-96 resound in the ears of Indians even now, while resentment at the final outcome, far from dying down with the lapse of time, increases proportionately with the growth of interest on the part of educated

Indians in the industrial and economic problems of their country. "Such is the strength of public feeling in this matter," wrote the secretary of the Bengal National Chamber of Commerce in 1894, "that ordinary language scarcely meets the requirement for its expression"; and although sixteen years have elapsed, Mr Dadabhoy obviously experienced equal difficulty in finding moderate language with which to clothe his feelings when dilating upon India's needs in the Viceroy's Council in 1910: "The countervailing excise duty upon Indian cotton fabrics is an impediment—unnecessary, unjust, irritating, and vexatious—which a wise Government would in the circumstances hasten to remove."

I do not think it is possible to deny that in this matter the interests of India were subordinated to those of Lancashire, though an attempt to do so is sometimes made. One such attempt has, indeed, been made quite recently by a Lancashire member in the House of Commons. Referring to the policy of this country in refusing to allow India to impose an import duty which might have a protective effect upon cotton goods, Sir George Kemp asked—"Why have we not allowed it?" And he proceeded to answer the question as follows: "Because we have said that if the fiscal system which we enjoy here in England is best for us, it is also

best for India." The suggestion here made that it was in the interests of India herself that we insisted upon an excise duty equivalent to the small revenue duty on imported cottons being imposed upon the Indian cotton industry, coming as it does from a Lancashire member, must command our highest admiration—as an example of magnificent audacity. It might have been more successful in carrying conviction if the history of the Indian Tariff Acts of 1894 and 1896 were not on record. Unfortunately, however, for those who seek to attribute the Indian cotton excise to British altruism, the history of those measures is on record and is easily accessible to any one who cares to take the trouble to make himself acquainted with it, and since it is important that the Indian attitude towards the fiscal policy of the ruling Power should be properly understood, it may be well to briefly recall the facts.

From 1882 to 1894 India had no general tariff of import duties. In the latter year it became necessary to tap fresh sources of revenue, and the Government of India, acting upon the recommendations of the Herschell Committee, reimposed duties upon imports at the general rate of five per cent, with one significant exception — that of cotton goods. This exception was insisted upon by the Secretary of State in

defiance of a unanimous vote of his Council whose views were voiced by Sir Alfred Lyall when he pointed out in his minute of dissent that—"The only ground for this special reservation in favour of cotton is that powerful manufacturing interests in England are opposed to laying on even a five per cent duty."

The passing of the Act, with its invidious exception, aroused a storm of indignation throughout India, and protests were showered upon the Government from all parts of the country. Let one example suffice. The Indian Currency Association of Bombay resolved that "to exempt all cotton manufactures would, in their opinion, be to *sacrifice the interests of India* to those of a political party in England."

Moved by the strength of feeling exhibited in India, the Secretary of State embarked upon further correspondence with the Government at Calcutta, with the result that in December 1894 an amending Act was passed removing the exemption of cotton goods from the operation of the tariff. At the same time an Act to levy excise duties on such Indian cotton yarns as competed with Lancashire goods was placed upon the Statute-book. In introducing this latter Bill, Mr (afterwards Sir James) Westland said: "I would not be dealing straightforwardly with the Council if I pretended that this measure was

recommended by the Government of India on its own merits. No Government would desire . . . to impose a duty on an industry so deserving of any fostering care which the Government can bestow upon it as the cotton manufacturing industry of India."

Even this measure of self-sacrifice imposed upon India against India's will was not sufficient to appease Lancashire. Some trace of protection was still scented in the tariff. The Indian manufacturer, it was urged, only paid duty on "grey yarn value," while the Lancashire manufacturer paid on the "finished goods value"; and during 1895 a fierce agitation was carried on throughout the County Palatine. Speaking as a member of a deputation to the Secretary of State in December of that year, Mr J. Whittaker, who had earlier drawn up an impressive statement of the Lancashire Case on behalf of the "Joint Committee of cotton manufacturers and operatives," said that, "while a year ago the fears of Lancashire were scouted as imaginary, twelve months' experience of the duties had resulted in a year of *almost unprecedented prosperity to the Indian mills*, and unprecedented disaster to those of Lancashire," and urged upon the Secretary of State the consequent necessity for immediate action—an interesting commentary, surely, upon Sir George Kemp's interpretation of the motives by which we were actuated.

This agitation resulted in a further manipulation of the Indian tariff in the interests of Lancashire, in the shape of the Indian Tariff Act of 1896, by which the existing cotton duties were repealed and a duty of 3½ per cent imposed upon all cotton manufactures except yarns and twist, an equivalent excise duty being imposed upon the products of Indian power-looms.

To refer to the strictures passed upon the Act of 1896 in India would be tedious; but a quotation from a minute of dissent by Sir A. Arbuthnot, at that time a member of the Council of India, may be permitted: "I object to them" (the Indian Tariff Acts of 1896), he wrote, "on political grounds. . . . The course taken by the Government of India in passing them was certain to, and has excited discontent in India, and has impaired that confidence in British justice which is essential to the stability of our rule."

A vast volume of evidence can, of course, be adduced to show that it was Lancashire's fear of Indian competition which dictated our policy in this matter. Enough, however, has been said to show how grievous is the misconception under which they labour, who would have us believe that it was from an altruistic desire to benefit India that we spent two years in jerrymandering her tariff. It would surely be both entertaining and instructive to have set out in parallel columns

explanations by—let us say—Sir George Kemp and Mr Dadabhoy, of the motives by which we were actuated when in 1721—the cotton industry being at that time an infant industry in Great Britain but one of importance in India—we imposed not a duty on, but prohibition against, the importation of Indian calicoes into this country. Was this another outbreak of solicitude for the Indian cotton industry?

Apart from the seriousness of the matter, the controversy is not without humour. The spectacle presented by a strait-laced Cobdenite fiercely insisting that a minute import duty had secured to the Indian mills "almost unprecedented prosperity" is delightful! We had laboured under the impression — apparently a delusion—that in the view of the Cobden Club a duty was not an assistance but a hindrance to production! But however humorous to the unorthodox is the spectacle of the orthodox vehemently testifying to — and even exaggerating[1] — the stimulating effect of small duties

[1] As a Tariff Reformer I of course accept with satisfaction so striking a testimonial to the efficacy of a tariff—testimony which is doubly gratifying in that it comes from a Free Trader. But Tariff Reformer though I am, I do not find it possible to claim for a small duty of five per cent on cotton piece goods quite so striking an effect as Mr J. Whittaker is anxious to attribute to it—especially when I recall the fact that there was in operation even then an excise duty equivalent to the import duty upon a large part of the Indian machine-made yarn out of which the Indian machine-

upon the industry protected, it is far from being so to the native of India. Mr J. Whittaker, as spokesman for the Lancashire interests, put his case with such engaging frankness that it would be impossible for any Indian who read his speech, even if he had not already been convinced, to entertain any further doubts as to the reason for the imposition of the excise upon the Indian industry. Had he required any further light thrown upon Lancashire's view as to the sphere which India should occupy in the Empire's commerce scheme, he would have been obliged by Mr W. Noble, another member of the "Joint Committee of cotton manufacturers and operatives," who was good enough to say that "Lancashire would hail with satisfaction legislation of a kind that would tend to make India prosperous and wealthy by encouraging agriculture and a larger exportation of the produce of its soil, which would prove the best source of wealth to such a country."

In view of such uncompromising utterances there appears to be little to be gained by being

made piece goods were woven. A predilection for truth compels me to confess that the real and main cause of the falling-off in the Lancashire trade with India in 1895 was a glutted market resulting from abnormally heavy imports in 1894. The total shipments of cotton goods from the United Kingdom to India during the years 1889-93 averaged 1,919,000,000 yards per annum, whereas the shipments in 1894 aggregated 2,276,000,000 yards.

anything but brutally candid, and we may without further hair-splitting accept as irrefutable India's view that the excise duty is nothing more than a conspicuous example of the calculating selfishness of the economic policy of the Manchester school. And we may further admit that the fears of the Government of India as to the treatment which might not improbably be accorded to India, should she prematurely signify her willingness to adhere to any scheme of Imperial Preference, were abundantly justified.

No such danger, however, need await her if when next an Imperial Conference is in a position to embark upon an unrestricted discussion of the question, she is given adequate facilities for stating her case; and all that is now urged is that there are in the circumstances of British-Indian trade undoubted possibilities of Reciprocity. As the late Sir E. F. Law—one of the signatories of the despatch of the Government of India of 1903—declared not long ago, "It remains for the Home Government, which may introduce Tariff Reform, to formulate such proposals as will justify India in accepting the policy of Imperial Preference. And such proposals can be formulated." In the following chapter suggestions will be made as to the means by which tariff reciprocity may be secured between India and Great Britain.

CHAPTER XIV.

INDIA AND IMPERIAL RECIPROCITY.

(Continued.)

WE may begin our examination by endeavouring to ascertain what advantages, if any, India has to offer to the United Kingdom. It has already been pointed out that the £10,000,000 worth of goods imported into India in which the Indian Government admitted that effective competition prevailed in 1903 has largely increased, and an enhancement of the duty on foreign goods sufficient to give British manufacturers a substantial preference would confer no small advantage on the United Kingdom The increase in the value of the exports from the United Kingdom to India during the past ten years has been from £31,354,780 in 1898-99 to £50,617,819 in 1908-9. The corresponding increase in the exports from the chief foreign countries trading with her during the same period is given in the table on the next page.

It is indeed surprising to find how large is the share in certain lines of manufactured goods which is now supplied by Great Britain's foreign competitors. In 1908-9, for instance, Japan supplied £235,500 worth of India's imports of hosiery against the £30,600 worth supplied by the United Kingdom. Sweden sent £158,700

Country.	1898-99.	1908-9.
	£	£
Austria-Hungary	1,618,917	2,577,749
Belgium	1,486,955	3,446,984
France	687,897	1,207,261
Germany	1,151,917	3,286,510
Holland	234,801	588,170
Italy	371,285	756,402
Japan	363,337	1,411,212
Java	130,537	4,130,875
United States	908,446	2,175,534
China (Treaty Ports)	360,675	754,373
Others[1]	2,575,414	3,135,707
Total	9,890,181	23,470,777

and Japan £73,800 worth of matches, while the share of this trade secured by the United Kingdom was the insignificant one of £4900. In iron goods Belgium alone supplied twice as much under the heading "angle, bolts, and

[1] All countries whose exports to India did not amount to £500,000 in 1908-9. Russia's exports to India, consisting almost exclusively of mineral oil, were valued at £1,368,663 in 1898-99, and reached £2,124,110 in 1901-2. As a result, however, of the events described in chap. v., they fell in 1905-6 to £188,664, and in 1908-9 still stood at only £186,446.

rod"; two and a half times as much "bar" iron; considerably more "nails, screws, rivets, and washers," and three times as much "wire" as the United Kingdom. The same country also supplied seven times as much "bar" steel as Great Britain; while out of an import of steel goods of all kinds, valued at £2,856,330, British manufacturers only succeeded in securing £1,406,218, or less than fifty per cent. A general idea of the extent to which our foreign competitors have already succeeded in capturing the Indian market may be formed from a consideration of the figures set out in the following table:—

Article.	Indian Imports, 1908-9.	Share of Foreign Countries.	Share of the U.K.
	£	£	£
Apparel	1,612,005	760,220	851,785
Cabinet ware and furniture	122,269	54,274	67,995
Clocks and watches	123,006	105,291	17,715
Hosiery	423,008	392,405	30,603
Dyeing and tanning materials	536,525	503,530	32,995
Glass and glass ware	779,563	651,696	127,857
Hardware and cutlery	1,950,546	650,474	1,300,072
Manufactured jewellery and plate	121,676	58,524	63,152
Matches	496,671	491,708	4,963
Steel	2,856,330	1,450,112	1,406,218
Toys, &c.	208,807	108,463	100,344
Wool manufactures	1,940,620	889,497	1,051,123
Total	11,171,026	6,116,194	5,054,822

The above table discloses the fact that in many

lines of manufactured goods Great Britain's competitors now take a greater share of the Indian trade than Great Britain, and shows the existence of a considerable field in which a preferential tariff might exert a valuable influence.

So far we have only indicated the possibilities of the particular form of preference contemplated by the Government of India in their despatch of 1903. Import duties, however, do not exhaust the capacity of India for giving preferential advantages to the United Kingdom. She has in the past made use of export duties, and does still impose an export duty upon rice which brings in a net sum of upwards of £650,000 to the exchequer. Whether this particular duty is or is not open to criticism is a matter of opinion. It certainly does not fulfil the conditions demanded by a Free Trader like Sir John Strachey, who, in the course of his financial statement in 1878, laid it down that, "As regards exports, duties should be levied on those commodities only in which the exporting country has practically a monopoly of production." Has India, then, the monopoly of production of any considerable article of commerce? It so happens that she has. Bengal and Assam are the only countries which produce the fibre called jute for which a world-wide demand exists, aggregating from 8,000,000 to 8,200,000 bales a year. Jute, indeed, has become during

recent years the most valuable of all India's exports, the surplus which she was able to dispose of in 1908-9 amounting to 17,879,903 cwt., valued at £13,223,037. Here, then, is a commodity which plainly fulfils the conditions laid down by Sir John Strachey, and a small export duty upon which would bring in a considerable sum to the exchequer. Nor is there any reason to suppose that such a duty would be objected to by Indian politicians. On the contrary, there is every reason to suppose otherwise, for when speaking recently of the necessity of raising more money for education, Mr Gokhale, after enumerating various possible sources of revenue, went on to say, "The fifth source that I point out is an export duty on jute—and on several other commodities. A five per cent duty on jute will mean about a crore of rupees."

But from the point of view of Imperial preference an export duty on jute possesses other than merely revenue-producing possibilities. One would have thought that the possession of the monopoly of production of a valuable raw material would have been turned to good account in the interests of the Empire so fortunately situated. The organisation of trade is, however, incompatible with a policy of *laisser-faire*, and nothing, therefore, has been done to take advantage of our favourable position. On the contrary, our competitors have

been encouraged to come and help themselves from our store—and they have not been backward in doing so. There was a time when the United Kingdom and India enjoyed a monopoly not only of the production of raw jute but also of the manufacture of the raw material into cloth and gunny bags. Dundee and Calcutta supplied the world. But with the growth of protection on the continent of Europe and America this happy state of affairs was soon brought to an end. Tariffs were raised against the jute manufactures of India and the United Kingdom, while the very nations who thus struck at the British industry helped themselves with increasing liberality from the British store of raw material. The method by which our competitors are gradually transferring to themselves the manufacture of a raw material of which the British Empire possesses a monopoly is clearly shown by the following table of import duties imposed by our three leading rivals:—

IMPORT DUTIES IMPOSED.

Country.	Raw Jute.	Cloth.	Bags.
Germany	Free.	34 per cent.	31 per cent.
United States . . .	Free.	20 per cent.	52 per cent.
France	Free.	25 per cent.	34 per cent.

The result of the control thus exercised by our rivals over our trade has already more than

fulfilled expectations, while the effect of their policy still continues. In 1906-7 Great Britain still took 42 per cent of India's surplus of raw jute; in 1907-8 her portion fell to 38½ per cent, and in 1908-9 to 37⅓ per cent. During the latter year Germany took 20⅗ per cent; the United States 18$\frac{7}{10}$ per cent; and France 10⅓ per cent, the bulk of the remaining 13 per cent being taken by Austria-Hungary, Italy, and Spain. The largest single buyer of jute fabrics from India is the United States, which takes her supplies mainly as cloth. It is surely significant, then, that while the proportion of the total export of *raw* jute taken by her rose from 14 per cent in 1907-8 to 18$\frac{7}{10}$ per cent in 1908-9, her purchases of Indian jute manufactures should have fallen in value from £4,431,000 in the former to £3,486,000 in the latter year.

In view, then, of the tactics adopted with such success by our rivals, is there any reason why we should not take a leaf out of their book, and impose an export duty on raw jute with a rebate when shipped to the United Kingdom?[1] Would such a duty benefit or injure the manufacturer in India and in England?

There are two possible objections to such a policy. It may be argued, in the first place,

[1] It would, of course, be necessary to impose an equivalent export duty in the United Kingdom.

that any considerable increase in the price of raw jute to the outside world might conceivably result in its production elsewhere, and in the consequent disappearance of the Indian monopoly; and, in the second place, that this or any other measure of preference granted by India to the United Kingdom would invite retaliatory measures at the hands of other Powers. Let me dispose of the argument affecting jute alone before dealing with the more general question of retaliation.

It is quite true that India's monopoly in the production of jute is due largely to cheapness, which "has enabled it to defeat its possible substitutes, and has prevented the existence of any sufficient stimulus for competitive production elsewhere"; and the possible effect of an export duty upon price would be a matter to be taken into consideration. What we require to know is the price which jute must reach before it becomes worth while for any one to embark upon its experimental production elsewhere. Fortunately we are not altogether without guidance in the matter. As a result of natural causes the price of raw jute reached an unprecedented height in 1906. The *maximum* and *minimum* prices realised during that year were £28 and £19, 5s. per ton, while the average price for the twelve months worked out at £4, 0s. 4d. per 400 lb. bale. This extraordinary rise in the price is said to have "stimu-

lated experimental cultivation in Rhodesia, West Africa, and other parts of the world." It would seem, then, that efforts might possibly be made to grow jute elsewhere, provided that there was a prospect of a price of approximately £4 per bale being maintained. Fortunately there is no such prospect, the price in 1908-9 having fallen again to an average of £2, 11s. 8d. per bale, while the general level of price may be gauged from the fact that during the previous five years, in spite of the inflated prices of 1906, the average price did not exceed £2, 18s. 2d. per bale. It will be seen, therefore, that there is no likelihood of the price being raised, by any duty that would be likely to be imposed, to a height sufficient to encourage competitive cultivation elsewhere.

Now as to the possibilities of retaliation on the part of other Powers. The United States is, as already mentioned, the largest single purchaser of Indian jute manufactures, and is also a purchaser on an increasing scale of raw jute; and it might be argued that if India were to discriminate against her in favour of Great Britain, she might retaliate by imposing duties on Indian jute manufactures. But she does already impose very high duties upon Indian jute manufactures, and could scarcely increase them without injury to herself, especially in view of the fact that she is dependent upon India for her supplies of the raw material.

But quite apart from these considerations, the United States is scarcely in a position to take exception to the step proposed, since she is herself pursuing a precisely similar policy. A duty of £1, 10s. per ton is imposed on Manila hemp exported from the Philippines, the United States manufacturer being given a rebate of the duty, provided that the hemp is imported to the States in an American vessel.[1] It is, indeed, quite clear that in the view of the United States a country is fully entitled to arrange any preference she may think fit with her Colonies and Possessions without thereby providing justifiable ground for hostile action on the part of other countries. The American Tariff Act of August 5, 1909, for instance, provides for a wide scheme of preference between the United States and the Philippine Islands. Under section 5 of the Act the products and manufactures of the Philippines, except rice, and with certain limitations as to quantity in the case of sugar, tobacco, and cigars, are admitted into the United States free of duty, the products and manufactures of the United States being likewise admitted duty free into the Philippine Islands. Remission of export duties is also provided for in the following paragraph of the same section: "All articles, the growth, product, or manufacture, as hereinbefore

[1] 'India and the Empire,' by M. de P. Webb, C.I.E., p. 97.

defined, of the Philippine Islands admitted into the ports of the United States free of duty under the provisions of this section and shipped as hereinbefore provided from the said islands to the United States for use and consumption therein, shall be hereafter exempt from payment of any export duties imposed in the Philippine Islands."

This view seems to have met with pretty general acceptance, and it has been stated quite recently in an important official publication that "It may now be regarded as a settled principle that trade arrangements between parts of the British Empire are to be considered matters of a domestic character, which cannot be regarded as discriminatory by any foreign Power."[1] It is obvious that if this is so, the retaliation argument against preference falls to the ground; yet so strongly has this argument been urged in the case of India that it may be well to direct attention to the unusually strong position which that country occupies, even apart from a general acceptance on the part of all the Powers of the principle above enunciated.

While the Government of India in their despatch of 1903 were at pains to lay stress on the serious effect which retaliation on the part of foreign countries might have upon

[1] Report of the Royal Commission on Trade Relations between the West Indies and Canada.

India, whose ability to discharge her obligations depends so largely upon the state of her export trade, they showed at the same time that they were fully aware of the strength of her position. "We are fully alive," they wrote, "to the value of the safeguard that we possess in the fact that so much of our exports consists of the materials used in foreign industries; and we believe that in normal conditions foreign nations will be deterred by the powerful motive of self-interest from striking at us, lest in doing so they might injure themselves."

The strength of India's position in this respect is clearly demonstrated by a consideration of the figures set forth in the following table:—

PRINCIPAL EXPORTS OF INDIAN MERCHANDISE.

Articles.	1906-7.	1907-8.	1908-9.
	£	£	£
Jute, raw	17,892,000	11,982,000	13,223,000
Cotton, raw	14,652,000	17,135,000	13,179,000
Rice	12,353,000	13,559,000	10,592,000
Jute manufactures	10,477,000	12,198,000	10,491,000
Hides and skins	10,230,000	7,301,000	8,312,000
Seeds	8,681,000	11,210,000	7,785,000
Tea	6,572,000	6,867,000	6,929,000
Cotton yarn	6,931,000	5,982,000	6,454,000
Opium	6,205,000	5,782,000	6,233,000
Lac	2,333,000	2,722,000	1,863,000
Wool, raw	1,618,000	1,402,000	1,389,000
Wheat and wheat-flour	5,227,000	6,097,000	1,241,000
Cotton manufactures	1,181,000	1,196,000	1,238,000
Coffee	664,000	743,000	927,000

The immense preponderance amongst Indian exports of *raw agricultural produce* is here clearly

brought out. In spite of the fact that the unfavourable season of 1907-8 caused a decline in the exports during 1908-9 of raw cotton, rice, seeds, and especially wheat, raw materials and unmanufactured articles formed 44·8 per cent, and articles of food and drink 21·7 per cent of the total exports, as against the 24·5 per cent represented by manufactures.[1] A careful study of the table shows, indeed, that the vast bulk of the goods exported are goods which form the life-blood of the industries of the countries importing them, or articles of food and drink, and suggests the correctness of the conclusions come to by the late Sir E. F. Law after a most painstaking examination of the character of the trade between India and the chief foreign countries. Summarised, his conclusions were that the United States was not in a position "to do India much harm"; that Germany was "far from being in a position to retaliate with success"; that France was "not in a favourable position to retaliate"; that Belgium and Austria-Hungary "could not retaliate with effect"; that it was unlikely that Italy "could afford strong measures of retaliation"; and that the position of Indian trade with Russia was "so adversely one-sided and unfavourable to Indian interests that it would appear reasonable, in any

[1] Of the total value of manufactured goods exported, nearly half is accounted for by jute goods, of the raw material of which India, as has already been explained, holds the monopoly.

case, to discriminate against her products, unless she agreed to make considerable concessions in favour of the Indian export trade."

It is maintained, then, that foreign countries would be unlikely to retaliate by imposing or increasing duties upon Indian products, since it would be to their obvious disadvantage to do so; and secondly, that even if they were to do so, such duties would, in the majority of cases, be ineffective in restricting the sale of the commodities affected. Once more, we are able to appeal to experience in support of our contention. In 1903 Russia imposed a sur-tax upon Indian tea, as a measure of retaliation against Great Britain for prohibiting the importation of Russian sugar, under the terms of the Brussels Convention. Here, then, we have a test as to the reality of "the danger to India of reprisals by foreign nations." In this case, the facts belie the fears of the Government of India, and fully bear out the contention above made that retaliatory duties imposed by foreign powers "would not be effective in restricting the sale of the commodities affected." Indeed, far from the imports of Indian tea into Russia being restricted, they steadily increased throughout the whole of the period (1903-1908) during which the sur-tax was in force, the figures being as follows — imports of Indian tea into Russia in 1901-2, one and a half million pounds (weight),

and in 1908-9, eighteen and a half million pounds —an increase of 1200 per cent in seven years.

Perhaps enough has been said to show that India has substantial advantages to offer to the United Kingdom, and that she is in a position to make her offer without running any great risk of injury at the hands of Great Britain's commercial rivals. The question which must now be asked, and if possible answered, is — Has Great Britain anything to offer to India in return?

The mere fact that the bulk of Indian exports consists of raw material suggests at first sight that there is not much scope for preference to Indian products in any scheme of Imperial Reciprocity. There are, however, exceptions to this generalisation. A transference of taxation from tea to foreign manufactured goods would obviously be of advantage to the Indian tea industry, the existing rate of duty being maintained on tea grown outside the limits of the Empire. A preference might likewise be given to Indian coffee, and much might be done by an alteration of the English duties on tobacco to remove the unfair advantage at present accorded to the American product. "Indian tobacco," wrote the Government of India, "is very unfavourably treated in the United Kingdom, being subject to the same specific duty as the higher valued American article. If the two

were placed on a footing of equality, and still more, if the Indian article were accorded preferential treatment, our trade should receive a considerable stimulus." There are about a million acres under tobacco in India, but her export is small, and during the last ten years has averaged 14,900,000 lb. per annum. So adversely do the English duties affect Indian-grown tobacco, that the United Kingdom takes none of her export surplus of unmanufactured tobacco, and only a few thousand pounds' worth of her cigars. There is, however, good reason, according to the late Sir E. F. Law, to look upon this as a trade "which, under more favourable conditions than those now existing, might develop great importance."

During the ten years ending 1907-8 the area under coffee in India fell from 148,389 acres to 99,511 acres, and her exports of the berry from 270,056 cwt., valued at £1,166,549, to 244,234 cwt., valued at £743,013. The people of the United Kingdom imported in 1908, 785,824 cwt. of coffee, valued at £2,186,680, of which amount 653,897 cwt., valued at £1,732,274, came from foreign sources, and only 131,927 cwt., valued at £454,406, from India.[1] It would seem,

[1] The importation into the United Kingdom in 1908 was unusually small. In 1907, the imports of coffee into Great Britain totalled 1,055,643 cwt., valued at £2,437,693, and in 1903—to take an earlier year—1,143,526 cwt., valued at £3,134,924.

therefore, that a preference on coffee would have a stimulating effect upon the Indian industry.

It is also within our power to give another valuable Indian industry some much-needed assistance. During the ten years ending 1907-8, the area under indigo in India fell steadily from 1,013,627 acres to 405,905 acres, and production of the dye from 139,320 cwt. to 51,400 cwt. Her exports which at the beginning of the period totalled 135,187 cwt., valued at very nearly £2,000,000,[1] fell in the latter year to 32,490 cwt., valued at £424,849. In the earlier year the United Kingdom took 30,973 cwt., valued at £478,360, and in the latter year only 9285 cwt., valued at £126,870. In what way, then, can Great Britain benefit the Indian indigo industry? The answer has been given by the late Sir E. F. Law in his minute attached to the Memorandum of the Government of India.

> It should be specially noted that if, in accordance with the general foreign system of tariffs, the United Kingdom were to impose a reasonable duty on synthetic indigo, as a chemical compound, whilst admitting natural indigo free, as raw material, the difficulties of our indigo planters would disappear as if by magic. And this is, perhaps, not too much to expect, the competition between the two articles being so close that the manufacturer could not appreciably suffer by the exclusion of the one or the other.

[1] In 1895-96 India's exports of indigo reached their high-water mark, the figures being 187,337 cwt., valued at £3,569,740.

The 576 indigo factories which still fought against adverse circumstances in 1901 employed 159,000 hands. Five years later only 196 factories survived, and the number of hands employed had dropped to 102,000. The decline is steady, but the policy of *laisser-faire* demands that statesmen (?) look on, whether with satisfaction, regret, or indifference being immaterial, so long only as they refrain from doing anything but look on. Truly a heroic attitude, and one recalling that policy of which so much was at one time heard in another sphere, and which was eulogised as the policy of "masterful inactivity"!

Wheat grown in India would of course receive the same preferential treatment as wheat grown in other parts of the Empire. The extent to which Great Britain has in favourable years drawn upon India for her supply of bread is not always realised. In 1904-5, for instance, Great Britain took nearly twenty-nine million hundredweight of wheat from India, valued at approximately £8,000,000; and her total exports of wheat during that year amounted to forty-three hundredweight, valued at little short of £12,000,000. The supply is, however, largely dependent on climatic conditions, and it is probable that, at present at any rate, she already produces as much as she is in a position to without the stimulus provided by a preference in the English market.

It is seen, then, that the United Kingdom is

in a position to offer India advantages in return for any preference which that country is able to accord to her. In other words, there is ample material out of which to fashion a scheme of reciprocity between the two most important portions—from a trade point of view—of the Empire. That India would be more than willing to discuss the matter, provided that she was guaranteed unrestricted facilities for stating her case, can scarcely be doubted. But it must not be forgotten that *if Indian sentiment is taken fully into account* in the discussion of any proposals affecting the trade and industry of the two countries, the abolition of the excise duty upon the Indian cotton industry will be the first concession asked for by India in return for advantages granted by her. The history of the duty has already been dealt with, but it is, perhaps, pertinent to ask, at this stage of our inquiry, on what principle is it defended? Ninety-nine Free Traders out of every hundred will probably quote parrot-like some text-book formula and assume that they have answered the question. But have they done so? If it is laid down as an axiom of free trade that the protective effect of any import duty must be counteracted by an equivalent excise duty levied upon the otherwise protected home industry, and that the policy of free trade being the policy of Great Britain, India must conform to it, the answer, whatever may be thought of

the merits of the policy, is at least intelligible. But no such answer can be given to the question here asked, for the simple reason that the policy predicated in the answer is not the policy which is pursued by the Government. A higher import duty than that levied on cotton goods is levied on almost every other manufactured article that is imported into India. Boots are imported from Northampton, and are subject to a five per cent duty on entering India. Boots are also made at Cawnpore, but are not subject to any excise. In 1908-9 paper to the value of £617,560 was imported into India and paid duty at the rate of five per cent, and on page 59 of a Government publication entitled "A statement exhibiting the moral and material progress and condition of India during the year 1908-9," we are told that "at the end of 1908 there were nine paper-mills at work, producing during the year about 57,000,000 lb. of paper, valued at £506,000." An admirable example of the material progress of India; but how can it be that the immutable principles of free trade do not demand the imposition of an excise duty on this £506,000 worth of paper equivalent to the five per cent import duty levied on the £617,560 worth of paper imported? In like manner, the 550,000 tons of sugar imported in 1907-8 paid duty at the rate of five per cent, whereas the 2,000,000 produced in India paid no duty. Why? Perhaps an even more striking

example is provided by the case of mineral oil, since a free trade Government have, during the past year (1910), increased the existing import duty upon this commodity by fifty per cent—*i.e.*, from a penny to a penny half-penny per gallon. Now the consumption of mineral oil in India is officially estimated at 157,000,000 gallons. Of this amount 84,000,000 gallons are imported and pay duty, and 73,000,000 gallons are produced in Burma and pay no duty; and these facts are not in the least affected by the assurance of the finance member, repeated with unnecessary frequency and emphasis, that in his proposals there was "not the slightest inclination towards a protective customs tariff." There were other official members who did not find it necessary, apparently, to lay stress upon the orthodoxy of the new duties, for Mr Gates, with a cynical indifference to the probable effect of his speech upon Lord Morley's free trade nerves, actually suggested as a possible result of the enhanced duty that in the long-run Burma oil might drive the foreign oil out of the market! What a horrible consummation of a fiscal expedient adopted by a free trade Government! Mr Gates, however, appears to have lost his awe—if he ever had any—of the great doctrine of free trade, for in answer to suggestions from Indian members that the duty upon sugar should be increased rather than that upon petroleum, he said, "The Burma petroleum

industry is surely as worthy of encouragement, or even protection, if you like to call it so, as the sugar industry."

In view of these facts it is surely impossible to justify the Indian cotton excise, and I have no hesitation in saying that it ought to be rescinded. If Free Traders really believed in their doctrine, the cotton magnates of Lancashire—who as a class are Free Traders—would scarcely be likely to offer opposition to India retaining a protective duty on cottons, for has not so wise a Free Trader as Mr Haldane said that "foreign protective tariffs at least do us no harm"; and as has already been shown, the ground of opposition in the past has been based on the assumed adverse effect of the duty upon the Lancashire industry. But it is useless to shut our eyes to hard facts, and when we descend from the lofty heights of the Professor's chair to the drudgery of everyday business, the Professor's theories are found to weigh very light when balanced against experience. And in spite of the theories of the Professors and the Cobden Club there is no reason to suppose that Lancashire has changed its opinion as to the stimulating effect of a protective duty upon the Indian cotton industry, and no reason, therefore, to suppose that the "powerful manufacturing interests in England" which were so successful in imposing their will upon the Government in 1896 would consent to

the abolition of the excise now. "While India is our Dependency," wrote Mr Tattersall, the protagonist of the Lancashire Cobdenites, in January 1908, "she will continue to be governed by our traditional policy of Free Trade," a challenge which was promptly interpreted by one of the most influential of the Indian journals as being "only a euphemistic way of stating . . . that the infant industries [of India] shall be strangled in their birth if there is the remotest suspicion of their competing with English manufactures." [1]

Under the circumstances the practical man will aim at the gradual reduction of the duties on both English and Indian cottons, while retaining, and if necessary increasing, those on foreign importations. Unfortunately, the huge surpluses which for nearly ten years fell with accommodating regularity into the lap of the Finance Member have ceased to be a feature of the Indian budget, and remission of taxation is, for the present at any rate, out of the question.[2] In the year 1908-9 the import duty on cotton brought in £787,000, out of a gross revenue from the Custom's tariff of a trifle

[1] 'The Wednesday Review of Trichinopoly.' See an article by Sir Roper Lethbridge, K.C.I.E., in the January (1910) number of the 'Imperial and Asiatic Quarterly Review.'

[2] During the nine years ending 1906-7, the surpluses of revenue over expenditure in nine consecutive Indian budgets aggregated 25¼ million pounds.

under £4,000,000;[1] and in the preceding year £1,012,600, out of a gross revenue from the same source of rather over £4,000,000. There would be no difficulty in making good the loss of revenue incurred by the abolition of the excise duty which has never been defended on financial grounds, and which brought in during the year 1908-9 only £236,000. A small export duty of five per cent on the raw jute taken by foreign countries alone during the same period would have brought in £384,791. But with every prospect of the present tendency towards increased expenditure continuing, it might not be so easy to find a satisfactory substitute for the whole of the import duty on cotton goods. Nevertheless, the difficulty is one which must sooner or later be overcome if only those who are responsible for the conduct of affairs will bear in mind the admirable words—was it the sprite of irony that introduced them into the mouth of a Free Trader?—which found a place in Lord George Hamilton's reply to the Lancashire Deputation of December 1905: "Excepting, perhaps, the ties which race and religion may weave, the bonds of commerce are the most powerful instruments known for knitting together the interests of scattered communities and of welding them together in an Empire."

[1] Exclusive of the duty on salt, and of the export duty on rice, which latter brought in a *net* amount of £664,900 in 1907-8, and 536,000 in 1908-9.

PART IV.

THE FAR EAST

CHAPTER XV.

THE OLD AND THE NEW IN JAPAN.

THE old and the new in Japan jostle one another crudely and incongruously in every corner of the country. Religion, the great conservative force in every land, swears undying allegiance to old Japan, and in many a tomb and stately monument rears imperishable altars to a majestic past; while modern industrial enterprise, at all times and in all places superbly indifferent to sentiment, erects hideous if necessary chimneys in painful proximity to temple and tomb. The ninety-nine visitors out of every hundred who travel to Japan to enjoy new scenes and to admire the ingenuity of Japanese art are consequently brought face to face from time to time with material manifestations of the temper of new Japan; and, conversely, the traveller who may be bent upon unravelling political skeins or fishing in commercial and industrial waters cannot fail every

now and then to fall under the spell of her past.

So it happened that, with thoughts fixed unromantically upon mundane matters, I chanced upon the great Buddha of Kamakura. Who does not know of the Buddha of Kamakura? Here indeed is a glimpse of the East that is dreamed about. All thoughts of factories, mills, and workshops, the toys and vanities of men, vanish like chaff before the wind, and some things in the complex character of a people which before appeared inexplicable become, to some extent at any rate, intelligible. As Kipling sang—

> "And whoso will, from pride released,
> Contemning neither creed nor priest,
> May feel the soul of all the East
> About him at Kamakura."

You pass through an ornamental gateway and on along an avenue of stately trees, then suddenly halt involuntarily as the first view of the great image bursts upon your gaze, and you realise instinctively that there stands before you in all its beauty of form and symmetry of outline the very apotheosis of the artistic genius of Japan. The great bronze image stands in the open, in grounds of exquisite charm—a charm which it is impossible to ignore. Twice I came when the blossom was on the cherry-tree and the camellia was in flower, when the

fresh green feathery leaf of the maple showed bright against the sombre-hued outline of cypress and fir. Men and women in bright *kimonos* passed up the steps, halting at the top to bow and breathe a hurried prayer, and all round elf-like children made quaint and incomprehensible progression upon high and hopelessly inconvenient-looking clogs of wood. And because of the beauty of the scene, or for some other reason, perhaps, which did not admit of analysis, I came again, not once nor twice but many times, when clouds scudded angrily across a lowering sky, and again when the heat of a summer midday filled the wooded glens and hollows with billows of soft blue haze, and each time the beauty of the scene appeared to me to grow. Yet amid all the charm of changing scene the idea that rushes irresistibly uppermost in the mind is that of absolute immutability. In the infinite peace which seems to find materialisation in the expression of divine calm on the face of the Buddha is a mute and inexorable challenge to change and time. The setting varies with the season, but the great image remains the same, untouched by the passing of time, heedless of summer and winter, springtime and autumn, unconscious of the men that come and the generations that are gone, wholly absorbed in sublime meditation and that perfect

peace which only comes with the final annihilation of passion and desire. All else falls into insignificance before that expression of unearthly calm—of complete and immense repose.

Perhaps nothing bears stronger testimony to the prosaic, phlegmatic character of the sturdy adventurers of the seventeenth century than their callous indifference to the charm and beauty of what they regarded, doubtless, merely as a heathenish idol. "The image," wrote Captain John Saris in his diary of 12th September 1613, "is much reverenced by travellers as they pass there,"—a form of weakness, however, which, he was careful to show, was little affected either by himself or his followers, for he adds, "Some of our people went into the body of it and hooped and holloaed, which made an exceeding great noyse. We found many characters and marks made upon it by passengers, whom some of my followers imitated, and made theirs in like manner." The ravages perpetrated by the travelling vandals of the present day have, indeed, called forth a pathetic appeal from the Prior of the Order charged with the custody of the image, which greets one at the entrance to the grounds: "Stranger, whosoever thou art, and whatsoever be thy creed, when thou enterest this sanctuary remember thou treadest upon ground hallowed

by the worship of ages. This is the temple of Buddha and the gate of the eternal, and should therefore be entered with reverence."

But the great Buddha was to submit to a crowning insult. A fierce and hungry collector came along, a man of a world where nothing is reverenced except gold, and he proposed—at a price—to transfer the great image from its temple grounds to a private museum of his own. Verily, it is satisfactory to reflect upon the fact that St Paul's Cathedral still stands east of the Atlantic!

A few minutes' journey by train whisks one from this place of hallowed calm to a scene of bustling activity in the naval dockyards of Yokosuka. Nowhere, perhaps, is the effect of the recent war upon Japan more patent than in her great naval yards; nowhere does the strength and magnitude of her ambitions find more cogent demonstration. The possessors of an island empire, the statesmen of Japan have not been slow to recognise the value of a strong navy and a powerful and numerous mercantile marine. Under a system of shipbuilding and ship-running bounties, her merchant shipping has made huge strides; and the advocates of State aid, in return under certain circumstances for State control, may point confidently to the successful transportation of troops in time of

war in justification of their policy. During the late war a single company, the Nippon Yusen Kaisha, were able to place at the disposal of the Government 250,000 tons of shipping, with which they successfully carried to and from the seat of war upwards of a million and a quarter men, 124,000 horses, and close upon two million tons of stores. Under the same paternal encouragement, the displacement of the steamers of her mercantile marine aggregated by April last (1906) 951,000 tons — an increase in less than three years of 335 ships, with a displacement of 203,783 tons.[1]

But striking as are these figures, and loud as is the tale of the destructive competition of Japanese bottoms in Chinese waters, the tale of the great naval arsenals and dockyards is even more significant. A visit to Kuré is indeed little less than a revelation. Armed with an official permit which read, "Kuré arsenal and dockyards, except the armour works," I approached the main entrance in the wall surrounding the entire works, and gained immediate admittance from the sentinel on guard. The first glance tells you that you are in the presence of a spirit of imperious energy and

[1] By the end of 1908 the Japanese Mercantile Marine consisted of 1618 steamers, with a gross tonnage of 1,160,372, and upwards of 4000 sailing vessels, with a displacement of 383,455 tons.

indomitable will. The man of "blood and iron" would have smiled approval here. You are brought abruptly face to face with one of the startling contrasts of the East. Outside the wall fragile houses, old-world courtesy, laughing children, sleepy temples, leisurely priests, and smiling women—all the recognised ingredients of quaint, fantastic, orthodox Japan. Inside the clash and clang of iron upon steel, the roar of machinery, and the hiss of steam, all the bewildering equipment for the forging of engines designed for the destruction of human life, vast piles of ugly scaffolding, toiling masses, and a ten hours' day! In the early nineties the naval yards at Kuré came into existence, the offspring of the war with China; to-day they provide employment for 30,000 men, and are capable of building battleships the equals of any now afloat. They are complete and self-sufficing in every detail. They turn out everything connected with the construction of battleships, from a rivet to a 12-inch gun.

Prior to the late war, nothing bigger than a third-class cruiser of 3000 or 4000 tons had been attempted; but the war gave great impetus to Japanese naval construction, and in January 1905 the keel of the first large cruiser, the *Tsukuba*, was laid down. To-day I saw her all but completed in her dock at Kuré, a powerful first-class

cruiser of 13,750 tons. A little way off lay her sister ship, the *Ikoma*, though not quite so far advanced. But Japanese ambition has not stopped here. Two vast battleships, the *Satsuma* and the *Aki*, are now under construction at Yokosuka and Kuré respectively. Not even the *Dreadnought*, the latest pet of the British navy, will boast superiority to these monster engines of war. With a displacement of 19,000 tons, a speed of 19 knots, and an offensive armament of four 12-inch and twelve 10-inch guns, they will meet with but few equals upon the sea.[1]

[1] The enormous increase of the Japanese fleet during the years immediately following the late war was not perhaps generally appreciated in England. The following is a list of the larger vessels actually under construction in Japanese yards at the time of my visit in 1906:—

		Tons.
The *Aki*	first-class battleships	19,060
The *Satsuma*		
The *Kurama*	first-class armoured cruisers	14,600
The *Tsukuba*		13,750
The *Ikoma*		13,750
The *Ibuki*		13,000
The *Mogami*	small cruisers	2,500
The *Yodo*		
The *Tone*		

In addition to the above, the *Kashima* (16,430 tons) and the *Katori* (15,980 tons) had arrived recently from England, and the following captured Russian ships were being made ready for sea: 6 battleships, 4 cruisers, 2 coast-defence ships, 3 destroyers, and 2 gunboats. The aggregate increase in tonnage represented by the above vessels is 226,483 tons.

By the end of 1908 the Japanese fleet consisted of 210 vessels of all sorts, with a displacement of approximately 520,000 tons.

And while poor, impoverished, heavily-burdened Japan is adding ships to her navy and regiments to her army, the plausible pundits who mismanage the affairs of rich, luxurious, affluent England preach pious platitudes from the Treasury front bench on the beauty of perpetual and universal peace, and, childishly happy in their belief in the immediate advent of the millennium, hasten to cut down the armaments requisite for imperial defence.[1]

Not far from the newly-constructed Japanese ships lay an erstwhile Russian battleship, the *Orel*, now the *Iwami*, no longer the grimy battered wreck that had escaped annihilation only by surrender, and had been escorted by Japanese cruisers from the fiery hell of Tsushima to Maizaru, but a trim and useful addition to the navy of Japan. The last act played by the *Orel* in the passionate drama of the Sea of Japan has been painted in lurid colours by eye-witnesses of the scene—a scene which portrays in all its ghastly horror the hideous reality of modern war. A third of the crew lay dead or wounded, the cries of the mutilated and the dying rose shrill above the storm of shot and

[1] This was of course written on the abandonment of the Cawdor Programme by the late Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's Government, a false economy which has resulted in an expenditure of over £40,000,000 in 1910, with a prospect of even greater estimates in the immediate future.

shell, until human nerves broke down beneath the terrible ordeal, and panic and demoralisation reigned supreme. Down into this frenzy of human suffering and despair came the callous order from the conning-tower, "Dispose of the wounded." The order was ruthlessly obeyed. "The work was carried out principally by petty officers, and no mercy was shown. Men were picked up and cast into the sea like so much useless ballast. . . . The scenes that preceded the capture of the battleship were indescribable, the sea being dotted with wounded men struggling to keep afloat."[1]

Away in the country is the Japan of your imagination once more. The roar of new Japan is far—infinitely far—away. Emerald hills and bubbling streams, distant outlines melting away imperceptibly in soft blue haze; sturdy peasant women, knee-deep in mud and water, working desperately to get the rice-field planted in time to be coaxed to maturity by the burning summer sun; tiny temples and altars to Nature's gods—all are here just as they appear in the fascinating and sympathetic writings of Lafcadio Hearne. The sojourner in the East scents a familiar atmosphere and adapts himself instinctively to his environments. He shakes off the restrain-

[1] From a description of the naval battle of the Sea of Japan, published by the Eisho Shuppan Sha.

ing thongs imposed by a conventional civilisation with something of relief, and travels once more after the fashion of the immemorial East, with his staff in his hand and his loins girded.

Shod with the straw sandals of the country—purchased at the rate of two pairs a penny—I started one summer's morning on a trip into old Japan. We pegged along, my Japanese henchman and I,—a worthy of the old school, with a name signifying in the English tongue "Little Mountain,"—and towards evening halted at a straggling village and put up in accordance with custom at the village inn. We had followed the course of a brawling river whose banks were lined with precipitous mountains clad warmly with dense forest and piled in tangled masses in all directions. At intervals along the road stood the inevitable *chaya* or tea-house, perched on some overhanging rock, seductively calling to the wayfarer to rest a while in the shade of its hospitable roof. In common with other frequenters of the road we accepted the welcome invitation, drank immoderately of the pale, astringent tea of the country,—for the summer sun beat pitilessly down on the valley bottoms,—and then tramped on again until the next *chaya* hove into view to mark another stage in the day's journey. Thus for many days.

The inn of Japan, unlike the serai of Western

or Central Asia, is superficially clean, and supplies all the necessaries and, in a modified form, some of the luxuries of life. Quilts, which the lodger spreads on the straw-matted floor, are provided for him to sleep on; food—edible if unsatisfying—is served him in tiny bowls, with chopsticks supplied; and a boiling-hot bath, common to all and sundry, welcomes him at the end of his day's march. The contrasts between the Far and Near East are, indeed, in many respects strongly marked. Here is a land that is kissed, not scourged, by the sun. Abundant water and a humid atmosphere have clothed the country in a mantle of tropical luxuriance and created in the Eastern seas a world of fragrant flowers and riotous vegetation, the very antithesis of the parched and sun-scorched deserts of Western Asia. In Japan the gentle and kindly nature of the people testifies to the peaceful influence of Buddhism; in Turkey, Persia, or Arabia the stern and haughty demeanour of the inhabitants bears witness to the fierce fanaticism inspired by the militant creed of Mohammed. The humble worshipper at the shrine of his ancestors, the æsthetic acolyte chanting with monotonous iteration the meaningless *Namu Amida Butsu* of the Buddhist litany, have little in common with the perfervid apostle of Islam: the intricate and ingenious architecture of the one contrasts markedly

with the grand and simple conceptions of the other.

Yet, despite such dissimilarity of creed and setting, there is among the peoples of Asia, from Samarkand to Colombo and from Tokio to Stambul, a certain affinity of thought, certain kindred characteristics, observing which the stranger from across the seas may say, "This is the East." The unabashed indecency of the bazaars of Western and Central Asia finds its counterpart in the frank disregard for convention displayed in the country districts of Japan, where life and social intercourse proceed innocently, if immodestly according to Western canons, upon the assumption that, though the serpent tempted, the woman did *not* eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge in the Garden of Eden. The woman gives suck to her child in the street, the village maid takes her bath in company with the village hodge, and these things present no cause for offence, because in the eyes of the people there is no offence in them. Again, if the traveller in Persia or Turkestan is brought into perpetual contact with an unyielding and irritating resistance to hurry, the wanderer in Far Eastern lands becomes early conscious of the fact that he is moving in a world where thought and action are characterised chiefly by a profound and imperturbable deliberation. Finally, East and West Asia alike vie with one another in proclaim-

ing the existence of that strange and mysterious law by which it appears to have been decreed that among the peoples of the West alone shall the sanctity of truth meet with respect or recognition.

Of this homogeneousness of atmosphere I have invariably been conscious when travelling in Eastern lands; and it was, perhaps, because a tolerably extended acquaintance with the men and manners of many Asian countries had taught me to accept it without question or reserve that certain symptoms of innovation struck forcibly upon my imagination as I travelled through the country districts of Japan. Schools presented a conspicuous feature in every corner of the country—not the schools dear to the bigoted literati of China or the intolerant mullahs of Islam, but modern, up-to-date, twentieth-century schools, where the knowledge and learning of the West is fast being imparted to the children of the East. I remember one day meeting a number of small boys returning from a village school in a district far removed from the influence of railways and big cities. On my approaching them they drew up to attention with military precision and bowed ceremoniously to me as I passed. I was somewhat puzzled to find a reason for this spontaneous display, and subsequently learned that the cause was to be found in the cut of my clothes. I was dressed after the manner of the West, and was therefore an object

of respect. You ask why? Because the Japanese are the most sensitive people in the world; because the day has already dawned when much that is artistic and characteristic of real Japan must be sacrificed at the altar of progress; because Europeanisation is the fetich of the day; and because European clothes are the hall-mark of polish and modernity in the gentlemen of new Japan.

Nor is it only the boys who attend the schools in this year of grace 1907; for the school-girl in magenta *hakama*, with satchel and books in hand, walking blithely to the nearest academy, is the rule rather than the exception of to-day—and a vastly significant one in an Eastern country. And if we turn to statistics regarding education, we find that they more than confirm the deductions of casual observation. Thus in 1899, 85·06 per cent of the boys and 59·04 per cent of the girls of school age were attending school—figures which had increased five years later to 96·59 and 89·88 respectively. During the school year 1903-4 £4,500,000 were spent on public education; and 5,976,124, or 93·23 per cent of the children, boys and girls combined, of school age were recorded as receiving elementary instruction.[1]

[1] The estimates of expenditure by the Department of Education for the year 1909-10 amounted to £7,473,375. In 1907-8 98·53 per cent of the boys of school age, and 96·14 of the girls, were returned as attending school, the percentage of both sexes attending being 97·38.

There is another — a powerful, perhaps a sinister—influence eating slowly but surely into the old communal life of the people, the influence of modern industrial requirement. Already thousands of women and children are toiling wearily in factory and workshop, attending mechanically to the great steam-driven spindles and looms which are slowly but inexorably crushing the life out of the old family hand-machines on which were made the exquisite fabrics embodying the artistic soul of Japan. Unguarded and uncared-for by a kindly legislation, their lot can scarcely be considered an enviable one. No Factory Acts grace the pages of the statute-book of Japan. "We have our duty plain before us," say the manufacturers, "to establish our commodities firmly upon the world's markets. Let us get our hold of them before we are tied and handicapped by Government interference." Such was the fervent prayer which I heard breathed by more than one manufacturer—a prayer which would appear to have every chance of being granted, since only so lately as August last (1906) the Japanese Government refused an invitation to send delegates to an international conference at Berne, held with a view to prohibiting night work by women, on the ground that the state of the industries of the country did not admit of such interference!

True, the women and children may smile over their work as the casual visitor passes to and fro among the whirring creels or the crashing looms; but then the Japanese smile is an enigmatical thing, and, as has been written, "the Japanese can smile in the teeth of death, and usually does." One must know something of the possibilities of the Japanese smile if one is to appraise it at its true value. "At first it only charms, and it is only at a later day when one has observed the same smile under extraordinary circumstances — in moments of pain, shame, and disappointment — that one becomes suspicious of it."[1] Some day the workers of Japan will rise, and will demand for themselves the same rights and privileges already conceded to their fellow-workers in the West — but the day is not yet. Before that time comes Japan will have dispelled once for all the illusion that she is a trifler in toy lanterns and paper fans, and will have vindicated her claim to be regarded as one of the manufacturing nations of the world.

In the above brief pages I have endeavoured to put on paper some of the impressions which I formed during four months of persistent travel and inquiry in the Mikado's empire. No one could emerge from such an experience without

[1] Lafcadio Hearne.

being deeply impressed with a sense of the growing ambitions of the people, or of the inflexible determination of those in high places to do everything in their power to assist them in bringing such ambitions to fruition. Forced in the teeth of their own determined and strenuous opposition to open their doors to the world and to enter into the comity of Western nations, they came to a momentous decision, and having decided, picked up the gauntlet which had been thrown down with a rapidity that astonished the world, and plunged headlong, and with an altogether unlooked-for success, into the arena of international rivalry and competition. That they regard their victories in battle merely as a means to an end, and not as an end in themselves, must be evident to any one who has had the opportunity of making even a superficial study of the people. Nothing is more galling to the vanity of the educated Japanese than to find themselves the object of erroneous beliefs upon this point. "On what grounds," asked Baron Shibusawa bitterly, "did I meet with so warm a reception at the hands of the prominent men of the world?" And he himself supplies the unpalatable reply: "The President of the United States praised Japan because of her military prowess and fine arts. Are not Germany,

France, and England praising Japan up to the skies on the same ground? If the warm reception I received abroad is based on the feeling that I came from a country known for its military exploits, I must confess that that reception is a deathblow to our hopes."[1]

The end, indeed, which the Japanese keep steadfastly in view is a far higher one than mere proficiency in arms, and does not stop short of political, diplomatic, commercial, industrial, and colonial equality with the first Powers of the Western world. That they have learned all that the West can teach them in the conduct of modern war few will be found to deny, but that they are capable of rising to the same heights in the war of commerce has yet to be revealed. It may well be doubted whether, as a race, they have the same aptitude for bearing aloft the flag of trade as they have for wielding the sword of war. Just as in China the military profession was despised and looked down upon by the people,—with what dire results the battlefields of 1894 soon showed,—so in feudal Japan the merchant classes were rated among the lowest in the community. It is true that many of the best men in Japan are now entering or have already entered the commercial lists; but

[1] 'Japan by the Japanese.'

it is equally true that the country is sending forth vast numbers of small traders who reflect only too clearly the status of their kind in pre-restoration days, and whose procedure in neutral markets is fast pinning to their country's traders the title of the pedlars of the East.

Pedlary in itself may be an honourable trade, but pedlary fraught with petty fraud, and supported by devices which debauch the commercial morality of the West, brings little but obloquy upon the country's fair name and fame, and provides an only too eagerly grasped-at cause for the enemy to blaspheme. "The barrier of a low morality," to make use of the words of Baron Shibusawa once more, "is by far stronger than that of bad laws"; and I hold that he is the better friend of Japan who makes full and candid confession of such shortcomings as are thrust within the radius of his view, than the plausible advocate who, by ignoring or denying all faults, encourages the nefarious in their ways, and disseminates false impressions which the cold and impartial evidence of fact is unable to sustain. When those who are responsible for the course and direction of Japanese progress succeed in inculcating in all classes of the community a due sense of the immense value of an unimpeachable honesty in every branch of

commercial intercourse, they will have succeeded in removing a serious stumbling-stone from the path which the nation is striving to pursue, and will have placed their country immeasurably nearer the attainment of the goal which they keep steadfastly in view.

CHAPTER XVI.

JAPAN AFTER THE WAR.

THE quiet of early morning was broken by the heavy booming of big guns rolling sonorously through the air, and awakening responsive echoes in remote corners of the city on April 30, 1906, a welcome indication to the vast concourse of people gathered in the capital that day had dawned fair, and that nothing stood in the way, therefore, of the successful carrying out of the prearranged programme. Little need was there, indeed, of the thunder of guns to herald forth the news, for the sun shone gloriously from a cloudless sky, and from early dawn expectant crowds of men and women streamed joyously westward to the Aoyama parade-ground, where were drawn up from an early hour the pick of the victorious Manchurian armies. Upwards of 31,000 men, fresh from the triumphs of the Yalu, Port Arthur, Mukden, and Liao-Yang, stood massed in serried ranks — an epitome of

the military genius of a people borne to the forefront of the nations upon a flood-tide of military achievement.

The vast gathering of spectators, banked in dense crowds on every side of the dusty expanse, awaited patiently the arrival of the Emperor. A pleasurable anticipation of things to be bridged over a prolonged period of delay, and when at length, to the strains of martial music, a company of dusky lancers clattered noisily on to the ground heralding the arrival of the royal procession, the whole vast assemblage swayed forward as one man in profound obeisance to the heaven-descended ruler of Japan.

A large force of men answering with machine-like precision to a single word of command is always an impressive sight; here, as column after column of khaki-clad warriors passed in never-ending procession, each headed by a man bearing a name of world-wide fame — Oyama, Nogi, Kuroki, Oku, and many more—the chords of memory were strangely stirred. To the spectator from the West, accustomed to the variegated brilliance of a full-dress military parade, the absence of all colour provided a noticeable feature,—infantry, cavalry, and artillery being garbed alike in identical uniforms of sombre khaki. A single figure in scarlet, conspicuous amid the general monochrome, alone gave colour

to the scene — the British military *attaché*, solitary representative of Europe in all the brave array. His presence there, surrounded by the generals of Japan, was significant of many things,—of the newly knit ties binding in close alliance the island empires of East and West, of the strange moves, too, which destiny indulges in, in the great game which finds a stage on the chess-board of the world.

It may, indeed, be claimed that the conversion of the people of Japan from the unyielding conservatism of centuries to the advanced liberalism of the present day provides one of the most remarkable phenomena as yet recorded in the pages of world history. The sudden and dramatic *volte-face* of the leaders of the restoration from an unbending policy of rigid exclusion to an advocacy of Western intercourse and Western ways threw open the flood-gates to an eddying vortex of innovation and reform, and relegated the old order irrevocably to the dusty limbo of the past. With an energy as impetuous as it had been long delayed, the venerable garments of a supreme antiquity were thrust violently aside, and from the seclusion of unnumbered centuries emerged a new and wholly unknown power — an Eastern nation clothed in the culture and the armour of the West. In the twinkling of an eye a novel figure

had flashed on to the stage of human thought and action, creating new problems and imparting unforeseen direction to the march of world progress.

It is doubtless to her prowess in the field of war that contemporary opinion assigns the proud position which Japan has carved out for herself in the parliament of man. War, indeed, bulks largely in the pages of her modern history. The unhappy juxtaposition of conflicting interests, the ever-increasing friction between East and West, and the growing aggression and ambitions of rival Powers, set blazing the touchstone of human passions, and lit up the passage from the nineteenth to the twentieth century with the devouring fires of war. For years a succession of plots and counterplots, of intrigues and the resounding clash of arms, have marred the intercourse between Russia, China, and Japan, while incidentally causing rude interruption to the sedate and passionless course of Korean progress. There was a touch of grim humour in the fate which decreed that in return that small and insignificant country should launch her Western neighbour upon the humiliating tragedy of the Sino-Japan conflagration, and should ring up the curtain also upon the yet fiercer and more passionate drama wherein were played out before an astonished world the successive scenes in the

downfall of Russian imperialism in East Asia. With her superlative attainments in duplicity, and her unalterable predilection for intrigue, she may be equally counted on to add immeasurably to the tangles of the Japanese political skein, and to render infinitely laborious the duties and responsibilities devolving upon the shoulders of the suzerain Power.[1]

With her triumphant emergence from so strenuous a period of probation, it might justly be argued that Japan had cut her way to power with the bayonet and the sword. She had indeed achieved much more than was to be found within the four corners of any written treaty. When she pricked the bubble reputation of Chinese military precocity, she excited the interested curiosity of the West; when she flung the torn and crumpled fabric of Russian imperial ambition upon the war-stained boards of the Manchurian stage, she demanded and received the respect and the recognition of the world for her claims to rank thenceforth as the first Power in Asia.

Nevertheless it would be a grave mistake to suppose that the ambitions of Japan have found their consummation in the capture of Port Arthur, or on the blood-stained battlefields of Mukden or Liao-Yang. She is advancing with

[1] Japan's *rôle* of suzerain Power became impossible, and complete annexation was formally proclaimed on August 29, 1910.

a fixed determination towards the goal which still stands far off on the horizon of the future. Military ascendancy may pave the way; but military ascendancy is by no means the sole end in view. Political power, supported by military prestige, commercial and industrial supremacy in East Asia, a dominant voice in the destinies of the Eastern world — such are the objects towards the attainment of which the will and energy of the nation are being turned. It is in the factory and the workshop, as much as in the arsenal and the dockyard, that the key to the future will be found—amid the roar of machinery and the hiss of steam, and the unceasing whirr and crash of the spindle and the loom.

For the successful achievement of such a programme, peace is an essential condition. Better than most men the courageous statesmen who were responsible for signing the treaty of Portsmouth knew this to be so, and, gazing steadily into the future, they did not hesitate to face the storm of public indignation which they knew their action must provoke. The world applauded and the people stormed. A military escort—no mere guard of honour,—the groans and hisses of the populace, and rows of white flags in place of bunting along his route, constituted the homecoming of the envoy of Japan, while the fury of the misguided mob found uncouth expression in

parading before the popular gaze gory representations of the detruncated head of the President of the United States, as the promoter of the conference which had been the means of disappointing them of their hopes. Misled by the tone of the native Press, which had foreshadowed a large indemnity, public feeling for a time ran high, until with the publication of the terms of the newly contracted alliance with Great Britain, soberer counsels prevailed, and the nation resumed once more its appointed path of progress.

There is much that is of supreme interest and importance to Englishmen to be found in Japan at the present day. Not the Japan of fancy depicted in a voluminous literature as a land of temples and tea-houses, a sort of quaint earthly paradise existing solely for the benefit of the flotsam and jetsam of the restless West, where the twang of the samisen fills the air, and the alluring charms of the laughter-loving, almond-eyed *geisha* reign supreme, and where the cares and responsibilities and conventions of the prosy West may for a space be conveniently laid aside; but the Japan which has of recent years excited the attention of more sober pens, the Japan whose pulse beats quickest in the busy thoroughfares of industrial centres and amid the bustling activity of great naval and military stations. The temples of Nikko and the tea-houses of Kyoto, the lovely

scenery of Chuzenji or Miyajima, still draw and fascinate a vast annual concourse of the pleasure-seekers of Europe and America; but in the factories of Tokyo and Osaka, in the dockyards of Nagasaki, Kuré, and Yokosuka, amid the furnaces and steel-works of Wakamatsu and the coal-pits of Kyushu, may best be seen and appreciated the real spirit of modern Japan. These things find no place in the recognised programme of tourist travels, which accounts for the existence of an unfortunate scepticism as to the industrial and commercial potentialities of Japan.

Yet history can show no parallel to the achievements of her people in this direction in recent years. It is no small thing that in a decade and a half she should have built up a foreign trade from a modest total of less than £14,000,000 in 1890 to £82,000,000 in 1905—a total, that is to say, for her population of 48,000,000 equal to the foreign trade of China with a population at least eight times as great.[1] In a space of thirty-five years she has constructed 5000 miles of railway, exclusive of her undertakings in this direction in Manchuria and Korea; and in face of the opposition of a vast existing competition she has created a mercantile marine of upwards of

[1] Japan's foreign trade reached the figure of £94,600,000 in 1907, but had fallen again in 1909 to £82,400,000.

6000 steam and sailing vessels with a displacement exceeding a million and a quarter tons. Not only has she succeeded in many lines in supplanting in her own dominions the products of Western factories with the products of her own—a development about to be further facilitated by a recent revision of her tariff law—but her manufacturers are daring to compete—and compete successfully—with the manufacturers of Europe in the adjacent markets of China and Korea. At Kuré and Yokosuka battleships of 19,000 tons and a speed of 19 knots, equalled only in all probability by ships of the British *Dreadnought* type, are at the present moment in course of construction, while private dockyards are finding a new source of profit in the supply of torpedo-boats for an embryo navy for Peking.

An atmosphere of feverish activity pervades the mills of Tokyo and Nagoya, Hiogo, Yokkaichi, and Osaka, where day and night alike may be heard the ceaseless roar and hum of wheels gyrating noisily in perpetual motion. The half-million spindles which ten years ago were described as "challenging the command of the Far Eastern market" are represented to-day by treble that number with a capital of close upon £4,000,000, and a half-yearly output of 184½ million pounds of yarn.[1] There is in Osaka a cotton-spinning

[1] The output of yarn in 1908 was 983,000 bales = 393,200,000 lb.

company paying a dividend of forty per cent. During the past year (1905) the port of Kobe alone shows an increase in the value of her imports over 1904 amounting to £5,375,000, of which amount £3,419,000 stand for an increased importation of raw cotton and machinery. The large profits, indeed, made by the spinning companies in 1905, owing to the low price of Indian and American cotton at the beginning of the year, and to the further fact that they had previously sold their production as far ahead as May and June, placed them on a firm footing, and induced such directors as were able to resist the grasping demands of avaricious shareholders for colossal dividends to still further increase their plant. In many of the large spinning mills English machinery, bearing dates as recent as the last three or four years, is to be seen, and inquiries at various mills elicit the information that the spindles of the country are being increased by many thousands at the present time.[1] With cheap labour, an unrivalled geo-

[1] It is estimated that before long there will be in operation in the country approximately 2,000,000 spindles. That the number of spindles possessed by a country is not necessarily a safe indication of the importance of the industry is clearly shown by figures contained in the Report of the International Congress of Cotton Manufacturers for 1910, which show that during that year the consumption of raw cotton in Great Britain with 53,397,466 spindles was 3,053,545 bales, and in Japan with only 1,948,000 spindles 1,241,000 bales.

graphical position, and an abundant water power, the value of which is being rapidly recognised, as is proved by the vast schemes for making use of it which are under consideration at the present time, the manufacturers of Japan can claim solid advantages on their side in the fierce struggle for supremacy in Far Eastern markets, and the increased value of the export of cotton yarn from £2,900,000 in 1904 to £3,300,000 in 1905, in spite of the drain upon the resources of the country owing to the prolongation of an exhausting war, is merely an indication of the prospects already within sight.[1]

It is sometimes argued that the impulsiveness peculiar to the character of the Japanese is liable, as a result of national elation at success, to launch them upon undertakings out of all proportion to their means. It is true that with the sudden influx of capital at the conclusion of the Sino-Japan War, companies sprang up like mushrooms in the night, paid vast dividends for a brief space, and then collapsed when, in due course, it was found that the capital had disappeared! Demoralisation and loss of confidence inevitably ensued; but Japan has learned wisdom since those days: the very fact that no indemnity is to be paid has had a salutary

[1] £3,231,600 in 1909.

effect in checking any tendency towards undue expansion, and every care is being taken to prevent any recrudescence of the bubble enterprises of eight and ten years ago. The moral effect of victory, too, has undoubtedly been to give the people a confidence in themselves and a consequent stability which they have not hitherto enjoyed. When a son of the land of Sinnim casts his bread upon the waters, he does so with the confident expectation of finding it before many days, and it was a Chinaman of inscrutable countenance who bought 25,000 Kanegafuchi cotton shares at 35 at the opening of Russo-Japanese hostilities, and who smiled with complacent satisfaction later on when they mounted steadily to 139! A charming villa on the shores of the Inland Sea offers tangible testimony to the perspicacity of Chinese commercial instinct.

In the city of Osaka may be seen a microcosm of modern industrial life. Ever the pioneer in industrial enterprise, the city has flourished amazingly during recent years, and boasts of a population which, already aggregating upwards of a million souls, is increasing at the rate of from seventy to eighty thousand a year. No longer content to rely upon the adjacent city of Kobe for a port, her people have already expended two and a quarter million pounds

upon the construction of a harbour, and are prepared to spend a similar sum in providing themselves with a thorough system of electric trams. Ere long they anticipate sharing in a colossal scheme for generating a force of 45,000 horse-power with the waters of an upland lake. The city is credited with over 5000 factories and workshops responsible for a production exceeding in value £10,000,000 a-year, and spinning-mills, weaving-establishments, dockyards, iron-works, sugar-refineries, cement-works, chemical-works, brush-factories, and match-factories conspire to array her in the smoke-begrimed garb of the manufacturing centres of the West, and to impart to her thoroughfares an appearance of immense activity.

What Osaka does to-day a whole posse of admiring and aspiring followers may be counted upon to do to-morrow—and surprising results have accrued. Bristles are imported from China and Europe, bone from England and Chicago, teak and ebony from the Dutch East Indies, freight and import duties are paid, the raw materials made up into tooth brushes, nail brushes, and hair brushes, at the rate of many thousands a-day, freight on the finished article paid back to Europe, and Messrs Kent undersold in the London market! Two years ago Japan was a large importer of refined sugar, to-day she is exporting the com-

modity to China, Korea, and Hong-Kong. The little town of Moji, itself only fifteen years old, is exporting 20,000 casks of cement to San Francisco—a single example of many of Japanese good arising out of American evil. It having been observed that the importation of printed calicoes had reached a value of £2,000,000 a-year, £100,000 is subscribed with a view to establishing the industry in Japan. The manufacture of glass, already exported in small quantities, is about to be stimulated by the formation of a foreign and Japanese company with a capital of £150,000. In the camphor of Formosa is to be found a valuable adjunct in the prospective manufacture of Japanese celluloid, and no little interest is being evoked by the erection of an Armstrong explosives factory in Japan. Within a stone's-throw of the gorgeous temples of Nikko, the prosaic sheds and chimneys of a flax-spinning mill stand boldly for New Japan, and when you enter a protest at this crude invasion of sacred ground, you are met with a shrug of the shoulders and the incontestable reply that the fall of water supplies a force of many hundreds of horse-power, and that whereas linen was formerly purchased exclusively from abroad, its manufacture now gives occupation to many hundreds of people at home.

Should you still be sceptical of the strength and purpose of the nation's aspirations, all lingering

doubts are dispelled by a glance at the attitude of paternal interest and solicitude towards commercial development assumed by the powers that be. Bounties and subsidies are the order of the day. State funds are allocated for the experimental production of cotton in Korea. "If Korea can ultimately supply this cotton," recently declared the Minister of Finance, "a very radical change will be effected in the cotton industry of Japan." Bounties are granted to shipbuilders and subsidies to shipping companies, and the nation's shipping grows apace. Freights on the railways prove unsatisfactory and lack uniformity, and rightly or wrongly the Government steps in and acquires the country's communications for itself. The holders of railway stock may raise objections and ministers may resign, but the will of the Government prevails. Where private enterprise fails the Government itself steps in. Two and a quarter millions sterling have already been swallowed up in a heroic endeavour to plant an exotic industry upon an uncongenial soil, in pursuance of which an array of coke ovens, blast-furnaces, and steel plant have been erected at the national steel-works of Edamitsu, and coal and iron mines have been acquired. Caustic criticism as to expenditure leaves the will of the ruling powers unscathed, and further increases are made. In conjunction with the Admiralty the capacity

of the coke ovens is increased from 500 to 1000 tons a-day, and additional blast-furnaces and Bessemer furnaces are set up. Steel rails, steel plates, steel girders, steel tyres, and shells are being turned out at the present day, and 180,000 tons of steel is the estimated output in another two years' time.

Coming events cast their shadows before, and in the new tariff law of March of the present year (1906) may be found an indication of the probable fiscal policy of the country at the expiration of the existing conventional tariffs in 1911. Reservation of the home market, and protection and encouragement of home industries, is clearly foreshadowed —such protection as will enable Japan to stand independent of the West, and to control the commercial destinies of Asia.

In the foregoing pages some idea has been given of the present industrial and commercial activity of Japan, and the possibilities of her future are incidentally portrayed. If her prospects appear bright, it must also be observed that the difficulties that lie athwart her path are by no means insignificant. In natural wealth she cannot compare with a country like our own, and coal, copper —a valuable asset in view of the world-wide and increasing demand for electrical appliances—cereals, timber, marine products, silk, and tea may be said to comprise the most prominent items among her

indigenous resources. Iron exists only in moderate quantities, and the export of tea must be described as a diminishing industry. Of all her exports, that of silk is by far the greatest, while that of cotton, as already indicated, shows a steady increase. It is interesting to observe that of a total export trade of rather more than £32,000,000 in 1905, approximately £16,500,000 was represented by the various products of silk and cotton, while copper, coal, tea, matches, marine products, porcelain, drugs and chemicals, mats and matting, straw, braid, tobacco, paper, and camphor come next in order of value.

The price of victory, too, has been by no means light, and as a result of the war she is saddled with a considerable foreign debt. Japanese financiers, brought up in an atmosphere of desperate financial expedients, have secured consent to a heroic scheme of amortisation, on account of which £11,000,000 is to be allocated annually for the next thirty years to the service of the debt—an amount equal to the sum-total of her national revenue of ten years ago. With no indemnity to swell the contents of the national purse, as was the case after the Sino-Japan war, the anxiety of the Government to foster trade, and above all to build up and increase the exports of the country, is sufficiently intelligible, quite apart from avowed ambitions in the direction of national commercial

aggrandisement, and in part explains the prodigious interference on their part in the interests of national industrial competition, as contrasted with a conspicuous absence of official interest in the regulation of the internal industrial economy of the country. Cheap labour, declare the manufacturers, is essential to successful competition with foreign industry, and the manufacturers have their way. Despite the fact that with the increased cost of living, in recent years wages have risen by from 50 to 100 per cent, fivepence or sixpence for a day of twelve hours may be said to be a fair wage for women in the spinning-mills, while many may be seen working considerably longer for appreciably less. Yet with all their cheap labour it may be questioned whether the action of the manufacturers is not destined to rebound upon their own heads. The highly coloured pictures of the delights of city life, painted by the procurers of labour for the consumption of the country hodge, fade sadly under the grim reality of extended hours and diminished pay, and are apt to excite doubts in the minds of the country folk as to the joys and advantages of factory life. Moreover, long hours are inimical to real efficiency, and the general severity of existing conditions can hardly be conducive to the future welfare of the race. Not least among the cares of the employer, too, as a result of all lack of reasonable legislation, must

be reckoned the hopeless levity with which the Japanese workman regards—or disregards—the obligations of contract, a state of things productive of an irritating uncertainty as to supply. Nevertheless, despite all such considerations, he prefers to accept labour on its present terms rather than, by drawing the attention of legislators to its delinquencies, to risk exciting an inconvenient labour emancipation propaganda, and bringing about the re-enactment upon the Japanese stage of the all too familiar scenes culled from the socialistic repertoire of the West. For the attitude of cold indifference, if not of open hostility, towards socialistic agitation of recent years, for the promulgation of drastic police regulations for the preservation of peace and order in 1900, and for the forceful suppression by the authorities of certain social democratic associations, the newly arisen aristocracy of wealth no doubt breathed a devout prayer of thanks.

If one hesitates to accept in its entirety the bitter assertion of an ardent lover of old Japan, that "there have been brought into existence—with no legislation to restrain inhumanity—all the horrors of factory life at its worst,"[1] one is at least forced to admit that, judged by European standards, there is much that may well call for redress. When one sees women undergoing the

[1] Lafcadio Hearne—'Japan : an Interpretation.'

physical strain of a fourteen hours' day at the hand-loom at a fraction of a penny an hour, when one unexpectedly encounters coal-begrimed and scantily clad female figures emerging from the coal-pit's mouth, and when one observes children of ten and twelve toiling through the long weary day for a pittance of twopence, one cannot but suppose that sooner or later the question of the rights and the position of labour will call for solution. Some day the cry of the children will be raised.[1]

"'For oh,' say the children, 'we are weary,
And we cannot run or leap,
If we cared for any meadows it were merely
To drop down in them and sleep.
For all day we drag our burden tiring
Through the coal-dark underground,
Or all day we drive the wheels of iron
In the factories round and round.'"[2]

But for the present the workers lack organisation and a programme, and the industrial machine grinds relentlessly on in the fierce struggle for advantage in the commercial race, and the women and the children toil patiently by day and by night for the industrial and commercial advancement of Japan.

In the *post bellum* enterprise of Japan there

[1] According to official returns for 1905, there are at the present time 43,678 children under the age of fourteen employed in the factories of Japan.

[2] E. B. Browning.

is much that is deserving of the careful and thoughtful consideration of Englishmen. The fortunes of Great Britain in Asia are inextricably interwoven with those of Japan. With the alliance have been created ties capable of proving of no small benefit to both contracting parties, and no cloud need arise to mar the good understanding between the two countries, provided that an absurd sentiment is not allowed to assign to Japan attributes which she does not possess. The doubtless well-intentioned though mistaken attempt on the part of certain writers to apotheosise an essentially human people can be productive solely of disappointment and harm. The unreasoning panegyrics of hysterical enthusiasts at home are calculated to evoke jeremiads on the part of those whose lot it is to submit Far Eastern developments to the cold test of unimpassioned criticism and practical experience. It is well not to lose sight of the fact that in the adjacent continent of China lies the obvious and legitimate stage for Japanese commercial expansion. Any one who is foolish enough to imagine that she spent millions of money and thousands of lives in Manchuria, that she staked, in fact, her very existence upon the fall of the dice of war for the sole benefit of others who were unwilling to put up the stakes, is likely to meet with a rude disenchantment. Such altruism may be preached, but is certainly not

practised by humanity as at present constituted; and while Japan will doubtless act up to the letter of her declarations with regard to a policy of a fair field for all, and will open the door into Manchuria so far as one man is in a position to open the door of another man's house, a microscopic examination of her procedure will not improbably reveal much that can scarcely be accounted in strict accordance with the true spirit of a policy of equal opportunity for all. It would be strange, indeed, were she to seek no recompense for her vast sacrifices in the late war, and it is absurd to suppose that she will not—so far as she is permitted to do so—take every advantage of her position to forward the interests of her own people in Manchuria. Should a reaction of public opinion in England set in to the detriment of the good relations between the two peoples, when it is realised that the supposed god is after all composed very largely of human clay, the enthusiasts will have no one but themselves to thank for the plain result of their own unreasoning and extravagant praise.[1]

A sober consideration of the situation with which the statesmen of Japan have to deal, of

[1] The reaction here anticipated did unquestionably set in: nor is enthusiasm in the public mind likely to be revived by the new Japanese tariff or the annexation of Korea, however well justified she may be in her action in either case.

the not unnatural expectations of her people in return for immense sacrifices undergone, of the inevitable attitude of the military party at the unexpectedly successful outcome of a tremendous war, should suffice to make it clear that there are no small obstacles in the way of immediately applying in its widest sense the policy of the open door. Japan has need of the friendship and co-operation of England, and a clearly defined public opinion in Great Britain, sympathetic and generous towards her ally, as far as generosity is compatible with the maintenance of the legitimate interests of her own nationals in Far Eastern waters, will strengthen the hands of the far-seeing statesmen who have thrown the whole weight of their influence into the balance in favour of equal treatment for all, and will do more than whole reams of diplomatic correspondence to bring about a liberal and satisfactory settlement of such questions as are still outstanding in the troubled arena of the Farthest East.

CHAPTER XVII.

KOREA, AN APPANAGE OF JAPAN.

THE dream of Hideyoshi has come true: Korea is an appanage of Japan. To any one who has set foot on Korean soil, or to any one who has followed, even vaguely and from afar, the successive scenes in the Korean comedy of the immediate past, the fact admits of no dispute; and the Korean Emperor, despite profuse protestations of admiration and affection for the Japanese Resident-General, is perhaps the only living soul upon whose mind the obvious has as yet failed to dawn. Hidden away in a small room at the back of the least attractive of all the palaces of Söul, his Majesty still revolves impossible plans in his uneasy mind for the independence of his kingdom under an international guarantee. What passes in the mind of the Korean figure-head is, however, at the present day a matter of little interest and no importance to any one but himself; it is with

accomplished facts and not with the airy speculations even of an imperial brain that the world is called upon to deal. Hence the text of this chapter—Korea, an appanage of Japan.

Geographical proximity inevitably drew Korea into the revolving orbit of New Japan. A powerful neighbour firmly established on the adjacent mainland, and in a position to descend at any moment upon the island shores, presented to the Japanese mind a state of affairs not to be tolerated, and strong in her belief in the vital importance of providing against any such contingency, she did not hesitate in 1894 to go to war. A whole aggregation of circumstances, indeed, conspired to light up the hills and valleys of Korea with the devouring fires of strife, while a hereditary feud of some centuries standing with the Power that disputed with her the overlordship of the Hermit Kingdom gave an irresistible impetus to the policy which was rapidly driving her along the road to war. Nor had she been guilty of any miscalculation in estimating the relative value of her forces and those of her foe. The war very soon developed into a procession, and before many days were past every Chinese soldier had been swept off the face of Korea.

But if the task of wiping out the soldiery of China proved a simple one, the ensuing task of

reforming and reorganising the inept Government of Korea proved very much the reverse. Of all things in the world reform in any shape or disguise was the very last that appealed to the immutable conservatism of the Korean mind; and after a brief though breathless period, during which measures of improvement fell like leaves in Vallombrosa, and with as little effect upon the land, the reformer retired from the unequal contest, baffled by a stolid and unyielding resistance, against which it was found useless to persevere.

But worse was yet to come. An almost bewildering succession of victories had attended the Japanese arms; China, the hereditary foe, had been smitten hip and thigh and driven effectually from the unhappy country whose inability to manage her own affairs had been the ostensible cause of all the trouble; but here the tale of triumph ceased. The statesmen of Korea were as incompetent as ever to conduct the affairs of their country to the advantage or satisfaction of any one but themselves, the troubled waters still made Korea an alluring pool for any one to fish in, and before many days were past another and vastly more formidable Power had stepped into the recently vacated shoes of China. Henceforth the whole force of Japanese diplomacy was to be concentrated in

a wasting and protracted struggle against the inexorable advance of Russia.

Into the details of the events which followed upon this unpalatable *dénouement* it is not necessary to enter. Korea became the unfortunate shuttlecock in a fiercely contested game, and was hard put to it to decide which of the two players excited her bitterest aversion. War over her protesting and helpless body became once more an inevitable episode, and that it was with Japan that she was finally forced to come to terms was due to the greater preparedness of the latter and to the paralysing swiftness with which she struck the preliminary blow. By a protocol, signed on the night after the outbreak of hostilities, the Imperial Government of Korea agreed to place full confidence in the Imperial Government of Japan, and to adopt the advice of the latter in regard to improvement of administration in return for a guarantee by the latter Power of the safety and repose of the Imperial House, and of the independence and territorial integrity of the Korean Empire. Eighteen months later, with the victories of Japan staring them in the face, the Korean Government agreed to accept the services of a Japanese financial adviser, of a foreign nominee of Japan as diplomatic adviser to the Foreign Office, and further decided that

they would contract no treaties with foreign Powers, and grant no concessions to foreign applicants, without first consulting the Government of Japan. The threads of the web were being carefully woven.

The future of Korea was sealed with the final victories of Japan. She had the bitter after-taste of the war of 1894 to warn her of the absolute necessity of firm and determined measures if the sacrifices which she had made at the altar of Hachiman were not to prove barren. She had ten years of national profligacy and international disturbance to point to in proof of the danger to the world from the prolonged existence of an unrestrained and untutored Korea, and better than all, she had a trump card up her sleeve in the text of the newly-concluded alliance with Great Britain, wherein the recognition of England was given to her paramount position in Korea — backed by the cogent argument presented by the most powerful fleet in the world.

The conditions were as favourable as could be expected, and the way was paved on the conclusion of peace for a renewal of the diplomatic onslaught upon the Korean Citadel. Nevertheless, it may well be doubted whether the veteran statesman of Japan, to whose lot fell the task of setting in order the Korean House,

looked with any great satisfaction upon the legacy bequeathed to him by his life-long friend and predecessor, Count Inouye, who had repaired to the Korean Court with shovel and broom in 1895. However entertaining to the onlookers were the proceedings which now occupied the centre of the Korean stage, they can have been nothing but a source of intense strain and anxiety to the man to whom all Japan looked to carry them to a satisfactory termination.

The negotiations which led up to the Convention which was to sign the death-warrant of Korean independence are worthy of being put briefly upon record.

Early in November 1905, Marquis Ito repaired to Söul, bearing gifts from the Emperor of Japan to his brother Sovereign of Korea, and *inter alia* a silver vase from the Empress to Lady Om — indirect testimony to the success which the schemes and pretensions of that ambitious lady had already achieved. On the 15th the Ambassador was closely closeted with the Emperor for upwards of three hours, a circumstance which aroused the suspicions of militant young Korea, who made abortive attempts at disturbing the peace by delivering perorations in front of the palace in favour of the independence of their country. The way having been duly paved by the interview of the

15th, a document embodying important proposals was handed to the Government by Mr Hayashi on the 16th—a proceeding which vastly fluttered the inmates of the Korean official dovecots. Both Marquis Ito and Mr Hayashi exercised inexhaustible patience in explaining in detail to the Cabinet the imperative reasons for inaugurating a new state of affairs between the two countries. Korea's mismanagement of her affairs had in the past seriously jeopardised the relations between the two countries and imperilled the peace of the world. No such situation could be tolerated again. Such was the drift of a patient and prolonged explanation. The arguments used bore the impress of an irrefutable logic, the explanations were lucid and to the point; yet the Ministers displayed a paralysing reluctance to take the lead in assenting to the principles advanced. The Prime Minister, with exemplary modesty, excused himself on the plea of ignorance, inexperience, and incompetence. Marquis Ito was quick to point out that while these deficiencies might justly have been pleaded as valid reasons for declining office in the first instance, they could scarcely be held as a justification for refusing to discharge the duties of office when once it had been accepted; and the Minister, quite unable to traverse the incisive logic of the argument,

broke down and burst into tears. Still no one could be found to burn their boats behind them by actually signifying assent, and the difficulty was eventually solved in accordance with the best traditions of *opera bouffe*, by Marquis Ito declaring that he would put the question for, and accept silence as giving consent. This ingenious solution gave immense satisfaction to the Cabinet, who were thus spared all further exertion in endeavouring to make up their minds to speak!

On the 17th diplomacy — intricate and protracted — was the order of the day. The proceedings opened with a luncheon party, given by Mr Hayashi to the Korean dignitaries, at which an animated discussion on the situation took place. Later in the afternoon the whole party, including Mr Hayashi, repaired to the palace to report progress to the Emperor, who had been indisposed on the previous day as a result of the long and momentous interview of the 15th. Here the discussion of the detailed proposals of Japan dragged wearily on through the long afternoon, the Emperor, who remained secluded in another part of the palace, being kept informed at frequent intervals of the progress made. As hour after hour passed by the sands of Korean independence slipped slowly but inexorably through the glass, and when at length at 8 P.M.

Marquis Ito and General Hasegawa, who had been consuming their souls in patience until they received intimation that the psychological moment for their appearance had arrived, hurried to the palace, it was felt that the supreme moment in the life of at least one nation was at hand. The almost unimaginable vitality of Korean powers of procrastination, however, succeeded in rising to the occasion by one last superb display; and it was not until the cold grey hours of early dawn that the hardly-tried statesmen of Japan emerged from a night of strenuous trial, weary but triumphant, and happy in the knowledge that they took with them in their pockets the title-deed to all that they had sacrificed so much to secure. How the discussion waxed and waned; how, as hour after hour sped by, the Emperor sent solicitous messages to the Envoy of Japan, urging him to rest lest the great labour he was undergoing should impair his health; how the minister Li at length spoke out and deliberately declared that nothing remained but to accept *in toto* the Japanese terms; how a Cabinet crisis took place and the Prime Minister fell for refusing to countenance or affix his seal to any agreement calculated to impair his country's sovereignty; and how Mr Min Yong Chol was thereupon instated in his stead, — all these details of the momentous Conference transpired

at a later date, as did also the full text of the hardly-won Convention. Under the provisions of this instrument a Residency-General was set up in Korea, the interests and subjects of that country abroad were placed in charge of the diplomatic and consular representatives of Japan, and the responsibility for her foreign affairs transferred from Söul to Tokyo.

The early reception of this revised edition of the Korean polity was not wholly encouraging. The temerity of the Minister Li in first assenting to the terms of the Agreement evoked a retort from patriotic Korea in the burning of his house; the students of certain schools who showed signs of unseemly commotion indulged in an enforced holiday from their work; a little harmless stone-throwing brought down upon its authors imprisonment and one hundred blows of the bamboo; and the air became thick with rumours of patriotic suicides, ministerial resignations, revolution, and civil war. No little truth, indeed, ran through the tangled skein of sensational rumour that now enveloped the capital. The Cabinet handed in their resignation, the Emperor refused to accept it; the Ministers persisted, the Emperor was obdurate. Result: a Gilbertian situation characteristically Korean—a Cabinet on strike. A change effected in the presidency by the substitution of Mr Pak

Che-Soon for Mr Min Yong Chol, whose career as Prime Minister had been numbered by hours, failing to bring about any alteration in the situation, as did also a peremptory order from the Emperor for a resumption of work, Marquis Ito at the end of a week evolved the idea of a huge banquet, which device was successful in drawing the Ministers from their retirement, and in setting going once more the creaking wheels of the ponderous coach of State.

Various earnest if misguided patriots, chips of the old Korean block, achieved momentary notoriety by inspirited protests against the new *régime* not infrequently followed by suicide, a proceeding which received no small encouragement at the hands of the Emperor, who accorded the victims state funerals and flowery posthumous titles. As was remarked at the time, "If his Majesty persisted in distinguishing suicides in this enviable manner, he would not be unlikely to lose several of his subjects." A notable example of this attitude was that of Mr Chyo Pyong-sik, an elder statesman and at one time special Ambassador to Japan on an abortive mission for the neutralisation of Korea under an international guarantee, who was early in the field urging the Emperor to impeach the Cabinet for concluding the new Convention. Failing in his object, he collected a following of malcontents

and proceeded to the palace, where he made violent remonstrance against the new order of things. The following day saw the leader and his band seated at the gate of the Court of Justice awaiting punishment. Towards evening a message of pardon was received from the Emperor, whereupon the stalwart hero proceeded from the Board of Punishments to the Board of Decorations to renew his protest, and was promptly relieved by the Emperor of all further concern in the affairs of State. Within twelve days of the signing of the Convention his chief follower, Mr Min Yonghwan, ex-Prime Minister and Chief Chamberlain, died by his own hand, to be followed twenty-four hours later by Chyo Pyong-sik himself, who "took opium" and expired on the afternoon of December 1.

At this juncture Mr Yon Chhi-ho, acting-Minister for Foreign Affairs, tendered his resignation two or three times, but as no one appeared willing to accept it he gave up what proved to be a useless formality, and retired to the seclusion of his private residence, whence nothing would induce him to emerge. Plots for the assassination of Ministers became as plentiful as daisies in the spring, and a profusion of petitions denouncing the Convention flowed steadily in. The regularity, however, with which these missives came to hand soon led to their being

looked upon as purely formal affairs of which no notice need be taken. Despite such ominous symptoms, moreover, it was optimistically declared by the end of the year that tranquillity had been restored throughout the country—an assumption which was rudely traversed by subsequent events. Beneath the surface feeling seethed and bubbled, and the spring and summer months of the year 1906 were remarkable chiefly for collisions in different parts of the country between the supporters of the new and the upholders of the old, secretly applauded, if not actually instigated, by the Court, for the suppression of which Japanese gendarmes and troops were not infrequently called in. Thus with many an expiring splutter did the flame of old Korea flicker slowly and painfully out.

The task of the new Resident-General was, indeed, no light one, and the statesmen of Japan were fortunate in persuading Marquis Ito to accept the office and so to carry forward the good work which he had successfully begun. An impoverished treasury accustomed to squander its slender funds upon a galaxy of palace sycophants and parasites was slow to acquiesce in the new restrictions of well-ordered finance, and when the Minister of the Household failed to extract from the reformed department funds which he considered adequate to meet the palace

expenses at the time of the new year, he incontinently resigned. An inquiry into the palace *entourage* revealed a motley crowd of between five and six thousand petty officials and hangers-on, of which number it was decided, as a first step, to dismiss about 3000 — a reform little calculated to add to the popularity of its author. With other sections of the populace reform in some of its manifestations met with considerable applause. Immense astonishment was created, for instance, by an intimation that men would in future be appointed to office by selection made with reference solely to ability and not at all to family connection and Court intrigue; and when further several appointments were actually made in accordance with this novel plan, no little satisfaction was added to the initial sensation of surprise. An announcement, too, to the effect that the Crown Prince, whose first wife had died childless, would wed again, caused much fluttering in the bosom of many a Korean maid, while the general interest excited by the news was doubtless greatly stimulated by the issue of an Imperial proclamation, which saw the light of day in March, prohibiting any wedding till the selection of a Consort had been made. By the late summer the number of candidates had been reduced by a process of elimination to seven, four more were about to be

rejected, and the final choice made from the remaining three.

Much criticism, partly extravagant and partly just, has been levelled against Japan in Korea. To criticise her presence there is obviously absurd. She is there in the first instance by right of might, but her position gained by might has received the recognition and the sanction of the world. The Portsmouth Treaty accepts it, the text of the Anglo-Japanese Agreement affirms it, the voluntary withdrawal of all the Foreign Legations from Söul acknowledges it. A *fait accompli*, sealed and confirmed by such practical and documentary evidence, is scarcely worth the trouble of assailing. She is there for an avowed and acknowledged purpose—the reform of the Government of Korea, a purpose in itself excellent in presence of the assurance which stares boldly from the pages of history that the Korean is unable to cleanse his own house; and it is only when we come to the methods employed that solid ground for criticism is reached. The red-tape disease is acute in Japan, and is always productive of absurd and petty regulations. So in Korea. Despite the difference in longitude between the two countries, Tokyo time must be used in Korea. The people must smoke short pipes, or again they must discard their immemorial robes of white for garments of a more dusky hue. Such regulations

are ridiculous to a degree. They have been tried before and have failed. They will probably fail again. The Korean has an inexplicable but unalterable preference for white, and with or without the sanction of the law white garments he will wear. To-day as in the past the most striking feature of the streets of Söul is the leisurely, white-robed gentleman, with his quaint black horse-hair hat, and his most noticeable adjunct is his elongated pipe.

Such things, however, are, after all, matters of minor importance; far more serious questions are those of the power and procedure of the military, and the attitude of the Japanese immigrants towards the Korean people. With the sacrifices of the late war still fresh in the memory, the attitude of the military party in Japan became a source of no little anxiety to the civil authorities. In the early summer of 1906 a stormy battle raged between the two factions in the Government over the question of the opening of Manchuria, and the eventual triumph of the advocates of the open door was said to have been far from palatable to the military junta. In Korea it is common knowledge that the feelings and the just claims of the natives met with scant consideration where the military authorities were concerned. Land was taken regardless of any considerations except the supposed necessities of

military strategy, and such compensation only was paid as those who commandeered it chose to pay. It was perhaps unfortunate, in the light of the adverse criticism which such action not unnaturally evoked, that loopholes should have been given the military, in the regulations defining the position of the Japanese authorities in the protected country, for an escape from the salutary restrictions of civil control.

That the Resident-General appreciated the requirements of the situation, and was sincerely anxious to do well by Korea, is in no way open to doubt. Reform in the administration, strengthening of the country's finances, agricultural, engineering, and forestry improvements—all these found prominent places in the forefront of his programme. Nor was he blind to the failings of his own nationals in the country. "There has been much to censure in the conduct of our nationals hitherto in Korea," he admitted on a public occasion in Tokyo. "The greatest indignities have been put upon the Koreans, and they have been obliged to suffer them with tears in their eyes. . . . Now that this Empire has taken upon itself the protectorate of Korea, this improper behaviour calls for the utmost correction." When it is added that a rough outside estimate of the actual Korean population is 12,000,000, and that in a single year (1905) the

number of Japanese increased from 55,000 to 72,000,[1] it becomes clear that as time goes on the country must fall more and more under the influence of Japan; and it is imperative for her good name and reputation as a civilised and civilising Power that she should leave no stone unturned to check and stamp out the high-handed and indefensible behaviour which has been a marked and unfortunate characteristic of her colonists in the past. The struggles of a weak and helpless people under the forceful guidance of a conquering power—even if that guidance be in the direction of improvement and reform—are at all times calculated to call forth the sympathy of the lookers-on. No one who has trafficked or travelled in the Far East can be blind to the fact that the victories of Japan conjured up a solid feeling among the Far Eastern residents of continental Europe hostile to the Mikado's Empire, and her people can ill afford to accentuate that feeling by any ill-advised or arbitrary action.

Thus entrenched in Korea, it was said that Japan was anxious to establish a Customs union between herself and that country. The mere fact that only so lately as November 1905 she had accepted the treaties existing between the Powers and Korea should have been sufficient to contradict any such assertion. But a further

[1] By the summer of 1910 this latter figure had been doubled.

guarantee was to be found in the perception and sagacity of the statesman then at the helm in Korea. "It is not with regard to Korea alone," said Marquis Ito, in addressing the members of the foremost political party in Japan, "but with regard to the whole problem of the Far East, that nothing opposed to the sentiment of the Powers should be done. No strong country whatever can march forward independently and at its own arbitrary convenience. If Japan, puffed up by her victories in war, should forfeit the sympathy of the Powers, she will be laying up for herself misfortune in the future."[1]

Japan was, indeed, fortunate in the possession of a statesman solicitous, above all things, of the honour and fair fame of his country; skilled also to steer her safely through the rocks and shoals of the international sea; and it was, indeed, a tragic example of the irony of Fate, that he should have been struck down by an assassin's knife, wielded by a citizen of the very country whose best interests he had served so well.

Since the above words were written the inevitable has come to pass: Korea has been merged in the Empire of Japan. Notwithstanding the laborious efforts made by successive Residents-General, the system of dual control proved unequal to the task of preserving public order and

[1] Speech to the Seiya-kai, February 5, 1906.

tranquillity, and impressed with the necessity of more drastic reform, the Governments of the two countries agreed to conclude a treaty "providing for complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan."[1] Thus August 29, 1910, saw the final passing of a picturesque but impracticable Empire.

[1] See Appendix IV.

CHAPTER XVIII.

COMMERCE AND RAILWAYS IN CHINA.

(A Paper read before the Proprietors of the London Institution, November 30, 1908.)

When I received an invitation to give a lecture at the London Institution, it seemed to me that I could not do better than take as my theme certain aspects of the many-sided Chinese problem. If there is one thing which is of paramount importance to the manufacturing and trading classes — and, indeed, to the people as a whole — of the premier industrial and commercial nation, it is the development of new markets. The greater the demand for British manufactures, the greater the prosperity not only of the manufacturers whose capital and skill are employed in producing them and of the middle men who are engaged in distributing them, but of the working classes also, whose prime necessity is certain and constant employment. This is a mere truism. But while it is

easy enough to indulge in platitudes as to the necessity of finding new markets, it is not quite so easy to point out where they are to be found.

China provides us to-day with a market of no little value. She took from us last year (1907), for instance, goods to the value of £15,261,750;[1] but the potentialities of the Chinese market are out of all proportion to its present capacity. In other words, China's talent still lies buried in the ground. Some day, when she learns to appreciate the wisdom of the diligent servant who made his five talents into ten and proceeds to emulate his admirable example, she will become one of the greatest trading areas in the world. Let me give point to this by a comparison. On May 13 of the present year (1908), President Roosevelt, speaking at a Conference of the Governors of the States of the Union, indulged in some sharp criticisms of the prodigality with which the mineral wealth of the United States was being squandered. I extract a single sentence only: "We began with coalfields," he declared, "more extensive than those of any other nation, and with iron ores regarded as inexhaustible, and many experts now declare that the end of both iron and coal is in sight." Contrast with this state of affairs the case of China. Here natural resources of

[1] Including Hong-Kong, Macao, and Wei-hai-wei.

almost incalculable extent are being sedulously hoarded up for future generations. Writing some years ago of the coal deposits in China, the celebrated German geologist, Baron F. Von Richthofen, declared that the southern half of the province of Shan-si constituted "one great coalfield of incredible wealth," and added that the quantity of coal available for cheap extraction was so large that at the then rate of consumption "the world could be supplied from Shan-si alone for several thousand years." At Ta Yeh on the Yang-tsze river, to give but one other example of the enormous mineral wealth of the empire, stands a mountain of iron ore three miles long and four hundred feet high, capable, according to the estimate of a European engineer, of supplying 700 tons of iron a day for 1000 years. Yet we find "worn-out London horse-shoes coming out 12,000 miles by sea, and then journeying inland within a stone's-throw of the greatest iron ore deposits in the world, there to be sold at high prices because a working plan without restrictions has not yet been found by which to drive a little way into the bowels of mother earth." [1]

When we begin to sum up the assets of China —its 400,000,000 of frugal and industrious people,

[1] 'The Truce in the Far East and its Aftermath,' by Mr Putnam Weale.

its incalculable mineral wealth scattered bounteously over a compact territory nearly half as large again as the United States of America, its variety of soil and climate, its immense rivers and vast seaboard—we find ample justification for forming a big estimate of the industrial and commercial future of that country. But I am particularly anxious to lay stress upon what I have said as to buried talents, because, contrary to some authorities perhaps, I do not look for any very great increase in China's foreign trade under existing conditions. Conditions are changing in China at the present time, it is true, more especially in the matter of improved communications, and upon this point I shall have more to say later on; but before dwelling upon this, let me give my reasons for differing with those who hold that the 400,000,000 consumers of China must necessarily constitute the stupendous market for British manufactures which figures of such magnitude not unnaturally suggest.

The conclusions which I have arrived at, and which I am about to put before you, have been formed mainly from personal observation while travelling through two of the largest provinces in China, the provinces of Ssŭch'uan and Yün-nan, having between them an area of 300,000 square miles—an area, that is to say, two and a half times as large as that of Great Britain and

Ireland — and a population of approximately 50,000,000 in the case of the former and 12,000,000 in the case of the latter. Since my journey through them was performed chiefly on foot, I had ample opportunity for leisurely observation. The first conclusion which I came to was that the requirements of the Chinese are elementary in kind. In all the large towns in Ssŭch'uan the shops taught the same lesson. Nearly every alternate shop was a food shop, and was engaged in a trade, therefore, in which the foreigner has little or no concern. After the food stores the next most numerous were those supplying cottons, the material with which the masses of China almost exclusively clothe themselves. And after these undoubtedly came shops which retailed a wonderful miscellany of articles —clocks, watches, lamps, soaps, crockery; glassware, china-ware, matches, and a score more. Opium and accessories for opium smoking were, needless to say, in evidence as well.

My conclusions, then, were tolerably simple, and may be summed up under two main heads— first, that of all foreign manufactured goods the products of cotton find the largest and readiest sale, and that for the rest the Chinese distribute their patronage impartially among the makers of a variety of goods usually classed as sundries; and second, that in the matter of cotton goods

Great Britain enjoys the lion's share of the trade, while sundries are supplied chiefly by Germany, Austria, and to an increasing extent by Japan.

These deductions from my personal observation are faithfully borne out by trade statistics. In the reports of the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs, her import trade is divided into six classes, as follows:—

1. Sundries.
2. Cotton goods.
3. Opium.
4. Metals.
5. Woollen goods.
6. Miscellaneous piece goods.

In 1906, the year during which I was carrying on my investigations in China, her total import trade was valued at £67,150,044, and this sum was divided between the six classes of goods as follows:—

1. Sundries	£32,628,896
2. Cotton goods	25,163,458
3. Opium	5,313,635
4. Metals	2,845,622
5. Woollen goods	721,362
6. Miscellaneous piece goods	504,071

You will notice that here sundries come first on the list, whereas I placed cottons above them. This by no means invalidates my deductions, and is susceptible of a simple explanation. Under the heading of "sundries" is included an enormous variety of goods—all those goods, in fact,

which the Chinese buy and which cannot be included in any of the other five classes. Thus, in addition to a variety of manufactured goods, we find under this heading large quantities of food-stuffs and raw materials the consumption of which brings no grist to the foreign manufacturer's mill. In 1906 the imports comprised under the heading "sundries" included—to take some of the most important of the food-stuffs and raw materials—such articles as follow:—

1. Fish and fishery products	£1,337,358
2. Flour	1,036,176
3. Rice	1,933,786
4. Sugar	9,936,961
5. Coal	1,420,587
6. Timber	888,283
Total	£16,553,151

These items alone, therefore, account for more than half of the £32,628,896 worth of goods classed as "sundries."

Now let me apply the test of figures to my second main conclusion—namely, that while the share of Great Britain in the trade in "sundries" is comparatively small, her share in the cotton trade is preponderatingly great. Again, taking the figures for 1906, we find that of the total of £32,628,896, which represents the value of sundries taken by China, Great Britain was

responsible for the comparatively small share of £3,232,479, or approximately one-tenth of the whole. In respect of other two of the six classes her record is far better, the woollen trade being almost monopolised by her, and her share in the metal trade amounting to nearly one-half. These, however, are, comparatively speaking, small items, and it is in the cotton trade that her great advantage is to be seen. Of the £25,136,458, representing the total value of the cotton import trade from all sources in 1906, the United Kingdom supplied £9,681,632, or nearly two-fifths of the whole. Looked at from another point of view, it will be seen that the value of the cotton goods which the United Kingdom sends annually to China amounts to practically two-thirds of the value of the whole of her export trade to that country.[1] Under existing circumstances, then, it is the cotton industry that is mainly concerned in Anglo-Chinese trade, and it is to the cotton industry, therefore, that my remarks will be mainly directed.

The value of the trade is considerable, but large as it is, it is not by any means as large as a superficial consideration of the potentialities of the Chinese market would suggest that it ought to be. It can be, and indeed frequently

[1] Cottons in 1906, £9,681,632; all other goods, £5,584,415.

is argued that here are 400,000,000 human beings who, without exception almost, clothe themselves wholly or partially in cottons. Surely, then, here is a demand which should keep the looms of Lancashire in a state of perpetual motion in their endeavour to meet it. Those who argue thus, however, lose sight of the fact that this predilection of the Chinese for cotton garments is by no means a new one. For hundreds of years—perhaps for thousands—the Chinese have dressed themselves in cotton clothes, and they have done so without the smallest difficulty, and wholly unaided by the manufacturers of Europe. Indeed I may go much further, and point out that until the inventions of Richard Arkwright and Eli Whitney revolutionised the cotton industry, the movement of cotton cloth was not from Europe to China but from China to Europe, in the shape of nankeens to provide small-clothes for our grandfathers. In other words, as in the matter of food so in the matter of clothing, the Chinese are to all intents and purposes self-supporting. It is true that the beautifully finished products of Lancashire looms have taken the place to a certain extent of the coarser Chinese home-made fabric on account of their superior finish and appearance. The wealthy man, that is to say, prefers the foreign

article to the native. But to the teeming millions appearance is nothing and durability is everything, and the machine-made fabric of Europe does not compare in durability with the hand-made cloth of China itself. A hand-to-mouth existence is the normal condition of the vast bulk of the population of China, and to people living under such conditions the purchase of their clothes is entirely dominated by three main considerations — durability, warmth, cost. In all three respects the native home-made cloth excels the foreign machine-made fabric.

The importance attached to durability and warmth is illustrated by the method of purchase which I found in vogue among the poorer classes in Ssŭch'uan. The purchaser weighs instead of measuring the material, and then proceeds to bargain as to the price per ounce, instead of per foot or per yard. This in itself proves that weight, which represents warmth and strength, is a matter of supreme importance. The importance of cost to the average Chinese peasant or coolie may be gauged by the fact that it is no uncommon sight to see the purchaser of a box of matches priced at 3 cash or the fourteenth part of a penny, counting the number of matches to see that he is obtaining full value for his money, before concluding his bargain. I found the ruling price of locally made cloth in Ssŭch'uan to be

about 28 cash per ounce. This worked out at from 24 to 25 cash, or about three-fifths of a penny a Chinese foot of 13¾ inches—a price which may be still further reduced by patient bargaining. In the same district the price of Manchester grey shirting was quoted as ranging from 28 to 36 cash per Chinese foot, according to quality.

Here, then, you have my reasons for forming a comparatively moderate estimate of the Chinese market even for foreign cotton goods, and once more I find that my deductions from personal observation are borne out by the statistics of China's foreign trade. In 1906, for instance, Ch'ung-K'ing, the port through which passes practically the whole of the foreign import trade of Ssŭch'uan, took rather less than 13,000,000 yards of foreign grey shirting. Allowing for the sake of argument six yards per head per annum, this amount would suffice to clothe rather more than 2,000,000 people. From this simple calculation we find that, roughly speaking, 48,000,000 out of the 50,000,000 inhabitants of Ssŭch'uan, or 96 per cent of the population of the province, are entirely independent of foreign supply. This calculation is, of course, a very rough one, but it serves to illustrate my contention—namely, that to base an estimate of China's demand for foreign manufactures upon the assumption that the demand will be proportionate to the size of her

population, is to base it upon premisses which are, to say the least of it, fallacious.

Nevertheless the population of China is so vast that even if only a comparatively small percentage of her people purchase British-made fabrics, the matter, as I have already shown by the aid of figures, is one of no little importance. The imports of cottons have, it is true, been abnormal during recent years. In 1905, for instance, they headed the list of foreign imports with a value of £27,293,548, and in 1906 this item still stood at the abnormally high figure of £25,136,457. The result of this over-buying has, of course, been a glutted market and a drop in the value of cotton imports in 1907 to £19,323,827 out of a total import trade of £67,665,223. Such fluctuations, however, will eventually right themselves, and must not be taken as signs of any real decline in the Chinese demand. On the contrary, I look for expansion in this trade in the future, and venture to add yet a few further comments upon it which, in my opinion, its importance demands.

Bearing in mind what I have said as to the purchasers of foreign cottons being limited to the middle and upper classes, it may be anticipated that the demand for such goods will by no means be restricted to plain goods such as grey shirtings and sheetings, but will be extended to the higher-grade Manchester goods. Wherever I made in-

quiries, I found an increasing demand for fast black "Italians" and other kindred fabrics. Goods of this class are undoubtedly meeting with steadily increasing favour at the hands of the Chinese, and in the manufacture of this class of article Great Britain stands pre-eminent. Inherited skill upon the part of her operatives and a climate peculiarly suited to the weaving industry have combined to place Lancashire in a position of undisputed superiority over all her rivals in this particular industry, a superiority which is clearly reflected in the customs statistics, no less than 186,304,000 of the 220,195,000 square yards of fine cottons imported into China in 1905 having been of English make. All my inquiries lead me to believe that the demand for fancy cottons is on the increase and is capable of considerable further expansion, and the reports which are received from his Majesty's Commercial Attaché in China go to confirm my belief. In his report on the trade of China for 1907, for instance, Sir A. Hosie says: "Of fancy cottons, chintzes, and plain cotton prints, printed sateens and reps, plain fast black 'Italians,' plain lastings, plain, dyed and figured, brocaded and spotted shirtings, all showed increases over 1906, and there appears to be little doubt that much of the money previously spent on plainer goods is now being diverted to these fancy goods which please the eye. Fast black 'Italians,'

for instance, are great favourites, and the imports rose from 1,302,906 pieces in 1906 to 1,921,402 pieces in 1907, of the value of £1,527,629."

Let me give in brief my reasons for looking for expansion in the demand for such goods. They are as follows. Silk is an indigenous product in China. Silk has consequently provided the material for the garments of the wealthy for many ages. There are in China large numbers who would dearly like to dress in the silks affected by their more wealthy fellows, but who are precluded from doing so on the ground of expense. For these people the beautifully finished cotton fabrics—such, for instance, as are supplied by the Bradford Dyers' Association—provide a convenient substitute. The difference in price in Ch'ung-K'ing between cotton "Italians" and silk was given me by a Chinese importer as follows: black "Italians" of the quality most in demand, 2d. a square foot, silk from 8d. to 11½d. a square foot. The consequent advantage possessed by the former over the latter to persons of moderate means is amply apparent. The importation of this class of goods has increased from 15,860,000 square yards in 1867 to 220,195,000 square yards in 1905, and the great bulk of these 220,195,000 square yards is made up, as Mr H. B. Morse, the statistical secretary to the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs points out, "by 'imitations,' by cheap

cotton substitutes for a more expensive woollen fabric, by an appeal to the eye." I might add that black "Italians" are not used for making trousers and jackets only, but also for the outside covering of shoes and hats.

At the other end of the scale of cotton products we find a large demand for a semi-manufactured article, namely, cotton yarn. This is used by the people in the production of the home-made cloth of which I have already spoken, the foreign machine-made yarn providing the warp for a weft of hand-spun Chinese cotton. In the most remote corners of the Empire I found a regular feature of the village street to consist of long white stretches of cotton yarn arranged by the women in preparation for their labour at the loom. The average net import of cotton yarn for the years 1901-5 was 335,063,872 lb., in addition to which the mills of Shanghai and other Chinese ports turn out about 100,000,000 lb., making the total consumption of machine-spun yarn about 435,000,000 lb. per annum. The great bulk of this consists of yarns of Coarse Counts (12's—24's), and the supply of this commodity has passed from Great Britain to India and Japan, whose cheap labour and geographical position have enabled them to practically monopolise the market. The amount supplied by

Great Britain in 1905 was only 2,943,333 lb., as against 248,974,333 lb. by India and 91,289,467 lb. by Japan.

I have dwelt at some length upon the cotton trade because, as I have been at pains to point out, it overshadows, both in its magnitude and its importance, the whole of the Chinese import trade. Let me now sum up in a sentence the final conclusion which I have derived from my investigations into the character of the Chinese market. It amounts to this, that China is in the main self-supporting, and that "foreign traders can only hope to dispose of their merchandise there in proportion to the new tastes they introduce, the new wants they create, and the care they take to supply what the demand really means." These words are not, in point of fact, my own, they are the *ipsissima verba* of no less an authority than Sir Robert Hart, but they exactly express my own opinion. If, then, we desire to increase our trade under existing conditions, we must endeavour to introduce new tastes, to create new wants, and to be careful to supply what the demand really means. How can this best be done? The massive conservatism of the Chinese is almost past belief. It is preposterous, but it is also unyielding and overwhelming, and it cannot possibly be ignored. It is quite useless trying

to force upon a Chinese something he does not want. I remember hearing a story which may or may not be true, but which is worth repeating as illustrating my point. The Chinese in a certain open port wanted red candles to burn at the shrines of their ancestors. They applied to the chief British firm trading in the port. The firm offered white candles of the usual kind. These were the candles they supplied, and the Chinese could take them or leave them as they liked. The Chinese elected to leave them, and were speedily rewarded for their decision, for a German, hearing of the case, cabled to the Fatherland for a large consignment of red candles to be sent out with all speed. Here was a case of a German, at any rate, taking care to supply what the demand really meant. For the following case I can myself vouch. A missionary in the interior once showed me a magnificent bundle of samples of cotton goods which he had been asked to submit to the local Chinese firms. The patterns on the goods were entirely out of harmony with Chinese ideas, and no one would look at them.

Obviously, then, it is most important to cultivate the tastes of the Chinese. This can only be done satisfactorily, I believe, by employing trained Chinese travellers to visit the centres of distribution all over the country and to make

reports as to the nature of the tastes of the people in the different localities, while at the same time advertising their goods. This system has been put into practice by the Bradford Dyers' Association, who were employing twenty Chinese travellers when I was in China. One of these men penetrated to Ch'êngtu, the capital of the province of Ssŭch'uan, where he secured a stall at the annual fair held in that city. Here he exhibited and distributed his samples, gave descriptions in Chinese of the goods dyed by his employers, and no doubt collected important information as to the tastes and wants of the locality. It is, I believe, by methods of this kind that the greatest results are likely to be obtained.

Now let me point out the main obstacles which at present stand in the way of any very considerable expansion of trade. They are in my opinion two—first, the restricted purchasing power of the people; and second, the absence of modern methods of transport. There are, no doubt, other obstacles in the way which are sufficiently serious, such as, for instance, the chaotic condition of China's currency and the irregularities and abuses of taxation; but to embark upon a discussion of all the disabilities under which trade is carried on in China would be a task of too great magnitude to attempt in the course of a lecture of only an hour's

duration. I shall, therefore, content myself with a reference to the two former. In the earlier part of my paper I called attention to the vast undeveloped resources of China, and pointed to the future which awaits the country. With the systematic development of these resources, remunerative employment would be found for that vast army of men in China who, as Dr Arthur Smith has pointed out, "are driven by the constant and chronic reappearance of the wolf at their door to spend their life in an everlasting grind." Cheapness runs riot in China, and wages are proportionately low. Here are examples from my own observation. The boatmen who took me down the Min river in Ssŭch'uan received from their Chinese captain 1s. 7d. per man for the journey of seven days—$2\frac{5}{7}$d. per man per day for able-bodied labourers working from dawn till dark. In the centre of the silk-weaving districts of Ssŭch'uan I found the pay of skilled workmen averaging $\frac{2}{5}$d. a foot, and the daily earnings of a skilful workman at this rate of pay aggregating 4d. In another part of the same province the members of the Blackburn Commercial Mission found the wages of the weavers engaged in manufacturing cotton cloth to amount to 1s. 6d. per week of six days.

It will be seen that wages on this scale do

not admit of the wage-earner putting by a great sum in the course of the year for the purchase of foreign goods.

How closely the purchasing power of the people in Western China is dependent upon what they are themselves able to sell is illustrated by the following facts which came under my own notice. In the town of Sui Fu, a considerable centre of distribution on the borders of the provinces of Ssŭch'uan and Yün-nan, the President of the Piece-Goods Guild told me that in 1905 the trade in grey shirtings and cotton "Italians" done between the town and the province of Yün-nan amounted to 60,000 *taels*, whereas, owing to the failure of the Yün-nan opium crop in the spring of 1906 the same trade amounted in that year to only 30,000 *taels*. This seems to indicate clearly that the people buy foreign goods in proportion to their ability to export their own produce in payment. We may not unprofitably glance, then, at the figures of China's import and export trade. In the year 1906, which I have taken for my statistical illustrations throughout this paper, China bought from Great Britain goods to the value of 15¼ million pounds. On the other hand, she was only able to sell to us goods to the value of less than 4 millions,[1] being thus

[1] £3,952 960.

left with an adverse balance of over 11¼ millions on the year's transaction. The figures of her trade with all foreign countries during the same period are as follows:—

Imports	£67,523,618
Exports	38,916,838
Giving a total adverse balance for the year of	£28,606,780

This seems to point to the readiness of the Chinese to buy foreign goods up to the limit of their purchasing power; and we are, I think, entitled to make this deduction, that her purchase of foreign goods will expand in proportion to the increase in her purchasing capacity, and that her purchasing capacity will in its turn be determined by the development or otherwise of her latent resources.

Now I come to the second of the two main obstacles—namely, the absence of modern means of transport. This is a matter of the greatest importance, since accessibility is one of the conditions necessary to convert such things as coal and iron ore from mere inorganic matter into marketable commodities. At the present time the vast area of China is traversed by thousands of miles of mediæval communications — perilous water-ways, unimaginable cart-roads, and tortuous coolie-tracks. It is, however, precisely in

this direction — the direction of improved communications—that China is making most headway under the stimulus of her growing ambitions and her new-born aspirations, and I propose, therefore, to conclude my paper with a brief description of recent railway enterprise in China. This subject is of particular interest to Englishmen for an additional reason to that provided by the prospects of increasing trade following upon the opening up of the country by railways, for, according to my calculations, Europe has at the present time approximately £30,000,000 invested in various railway enterprises in China and Manchuria, a preponderating proportion of which is British capital.

The evolution of railway construction in China during the past twelve years is of extreme interest, since it reflects the various stages in the history of the gradual emancipation of China from foreign control, so far as that movement has at present gone. The first railways which were built were constructed, controlled, and, indeed, owned by foreign Governments. This was during the period when the partition of China was in the air, and when "spheres of influence" were consequently the order of the day. Railways coming under this category are the Russian railway in Manchuria, a great part of which is now in the hands of Japan, the German railway

in Shantung, and the French railway at present being built in Yün-nan. China soon became alive to the danger of these political weapons in the hands of the foreigner and to the part which they were playing in ushering on the break up of the Empire, and in the summer of 1900 she entered her protest through the agency of the "Boxers."

Thereafter came a change in the relations between Europe and China which was reflected in the changed conditions under which the next series of railways was built. When equilibrium, which had been so rudely shaken in 1900, was more or less restored, foreigners again came forward with schemes for constructing railways. Far greater respect, however, was now shown to China, and though such lines as were undertaken were built under foreign management and financed with foreign capital, and a share of their profits hypothecated to the foreign concessionaires, they were nevertheless regarded as Chinese Government enterprises. The three lines that were constructed under these conditions are the Peking-Hankow railway, the Ching-ting-Tai-yuen-fu line, and the Shanghai-Nanking railway.

Then came the Titanic struggle in Manchuria, amid whose fertile plains and wooded mountains men of the East warred desperately with men of the West. China looked on with drawn

breath, pondering many things, as the representatives of East and West rough-hewed their destinies at her gates, and when the great outstanding lesson of the war emerged, when it was made clear that, *cæteris paribus*, the people of the East were a match for the people of the West, seed which had already been sown sprang suddenly to life; theories which up to now had been amorphous and indefinite became the cardinal articles of a new belief. Once more the changed attitude of China towards Europe was reflected in her railway agreements. Capital was wanted and capital had to be borrowed, but henceforth the terms upon which such capital was borrowed were going to be China's terms and not the terms of the foreign concessionaire. Under these changed conditions various loan agreements were contracted, and the feature which calls for comment in these transactions is to be found in the fact that in each succeeding agreement the terms have been more favourable to China and consequently less favourable to the foreigner.

First came a contract in March 1907, for a loan for the construction of the Canton-Kowloon railway. In this case the railway is mortgaged as security for the loan, and the British engineer-in-chief and chief accountant, for whose appointment provision is made under the terms of the

agreement, have a certain measure of authority and responsibility conferred upon them as representatives of the bondholders. Since the Canton-Kowloon loan agreement, loan contracts have been arranged for the construction of two other important railways — namely, for the Tientsin-Pukow railway, the agreement for which was signed in January 1908; and for the Shanghai-Hangchow-Ningpo line, the agreement for which was signed in March 1908. In these cases the loans are guaranteed by the Chinese Government, but the railways themselves are not mortgaged as security, and the European experts have no position except that of *employés* in the service of the Chinese Railway Administration. I am by no means certain that the average investor in these last two ventures realises how great is the change in the conditions under which he has invested his money, and I am inclined to think that when it does dawn fully upon him, he will make up his mind that next time the Chinese want his money they will have to offer him something more than an Imperial edict by way of security.

Money will, unquestionably, be wanted for further railway projects. According to M. de Lapeyrière, an engineer on the Shansi railways, there are in China proper at the present time 1728 miles of railway already open, 1087 miles

under construction, 3618 miles sanctioned, and a further 2575 miles already projected. The question of chief importance to China is, of course, on what terms will the money required be forthcoming? Her determination to regain as far as possible complete ownership and control of existing railways is shown by her recent loan of £5,000,000 from England and France for the purpose of buying back the Peking-Hankow railway, and we may be sure that she will endeavour to raise her railway loans in future on conditions similar to those on which she borrowed the money for the Tientsin-Pukow and Shanghai-Ningpo lines. This, no doubt, displays a very proper and a very natural sentiment on the part of the Chinese, but there are features of the "rights recovery movement" which are likely to have a steadying effect upon European investors. In the case of the Shanghai-Ningpo railway, for instance, no sooner had the Chinese Government contracted their loan agreement with a British syndicate than they handed over the construction and control of the line to two private Chinese companies in the provinces of Chekiang and Kiangsu, in spite of the fact that it was specifically recorded in the agreement that the construction and control of the line were vested in themselves. Needless to say, the prospects of such undertakings becoming remunerative are,

under such circumstances, greatly diminished, and the value of the investment is depreciated accordingly. Still more ominous have been certain recent developments in connection with the Imperial railways of Northern China. These lines, which connect Peking with such important places as Niu-chwang and Mukden in Manchuria, passing through Tientsin and Shan-hai-kuan, are the only lines of any importance that I have not so far mentioned. The reason is that they were constructed under peculiar circumstances and do not fall within any one of the three categories into which I have divided all other railways in China. The main line was in the first instance constructed for the Chinese Government by British engineers and financed by the Viceroy of Chih-li. In 1898, however, a loan was contracted with British capitalists for the extension of the line beyond the great wall. Russian aggression in North China was at that time a serious and a growing menace, and the British Government, realising the advantage of China strengthening her hold upon the regions to the north and east of Peking, took up an attitude of active benevolence towards the transaction which proved of the greatest benefit to China. To make a long story short, this railway is a Chinese property. The Chinese Government exercises full control

and enjoys the whole of the profits of the enterprise. Her representatives are entirely responsible for the administration of the line; but the bondholders have this security—namely, the supervision of its maintenance, receipts, and expenditure by a British engineer-in-chief and chief accountant. The satisfactory working of this arrangement is sufficiently demonstrated by a glance at the latest returns of the receipts of the railway. The average number of miles open to traffic during the year ending September 30, 1907, was 572. During this time 3,276,202 passengers travelled by the line, and the total gross earnings amounted to 9,744,866 dollars. The working expenses totalled 3,686,320 dollars, leaving a net profit on the year of 6,058,546 dollars. The "rights recovery" fever has, however, even spread to the Imperial Railways of North China. The present Minister of Communications, Chen-pi, who is described by Dr Morrison, the well-known correspondent of 'The Times,' as "one of the most corrupt and incompetent officials at present holding high office in China," has thought it necessary to disturb the smooth working of the concern by undermining the authority of Mr Kinder, the British engineer-in-chief. Objectionable contracts have been entered into behind Mr Kinder's back, British *employés* have been summarily dismissed,

with the result that Mr Kinder has himself tendered his resignation.

The moral of all this is that the hare-brained apostles of the new patriotism are for the moment in the ascendant, and are intoxicated with the wine of recent success. Nevertheless, no one knows better than does the well-informed Chinese how dangerous to his country's credit must be any undue prolongation of a policy of this kind. Chinese administration unchecked by foreign supervision does not yet inspire that confidence which is essential if capital is to be attracted instead of being frightened away. Let me conclude my brief survey by a quotation from an admirable article on Chinese Railways and Foreign Capital by the Shanghai correspondent of 'The Times':—

"It is a far cry from Lombard Street to Peking. Nevertheless, capital is a sensitive organism with strangely developed intuitions of danger; and there can be but little doubt of the danger to China's ultimate credit, and therefore to the interests of the bondholder, if any considerable amount of foreign capital should be invested in enterprises under purely Chinese administration. On this point the best informed Chinese are agreed. They are aware that, in the absence of European experts, and failing the moral effect of regular administrative methods and organisa-

tion, there is but little prospect of any commercial enterprise under Chinese official direction proving permanently successful under existing conditions."[1]

It is possible that a rebuff will have to be administered to the hooligans of reform before sane and sober counsels prevail once more. When the time comes when it is realised by China as a whole that it is in co-operation with the foreigner upon mutually beneficial terms rather than in a Chauvinistic exclusion of him that her salvation lies, Englishmen will be ready to come forward, as before, with capital and skill to help forward the great movement of regeneration which even now stirs the pulses of the most ancient and the most long-lived Empire which the world has seen.

[1] 'The Times,' August 18, 1908. I have based the above survey of railway construction in China on the article in question.

APPENDIX I.

CONVENTION BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND RUSSIA RELATING TO PERSIA, AFGHANISTAN, AND THIBET.

Signed at St Petersburgh, August 31, 1907, *and ratified September* 23, 1907.

CONVENTION.

HIS Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, animated by the sincere desire to settle by mutual agreement different questions concerning the interests of their States on the Continent of Asia, have determined to conclude Agreements destined to prevent all cause of misunderstanding between Great Britain and Russia in regard to the questions referred to, and have nominated for this purpose their respective Plenipotentiaries, to wit:

His Majesty the King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India, the Right Honourable Sir Arthur Nicolson, His Majesty's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias;

His Majesty the Emperor of All the Russias, the Master of his Court Alexander Iswolsky, Minister for Foreign Affairs;

Who, having communicated to each other their full powers, found in good and due form, have agreed on the following :—

Agreement concerning Persia.

The Governments of Great Britain and Russia having mutually engaged to respect the integrity and independence of Persia, and sincerely desiring the preservation of order throughout that country and its peaceful development, as well as the permanent establishment of equal advantages for the trade and industry of all other nations;

Considering that each of them has, for geographical and economic reasons, a special interest in the maintenance of peace and order in certain provinces of Persia adjoining, or in the neighbourhood of, the Russian frontier on the one hand, and the frontiers of Afghanistan and Baluchistan on the other hand; and being desirous of avoiding all cause of conflict between their respective interests in the above-mentioned provinces of Persia;

Have agreed on the following terms :—

I. Great Britain engages not to seek for herself, and not to support in favour of British subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any Concessions of a political or commercial nature—such as Concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, &c.—beyond a line starting from Kasr-i-Shirin, passing through Isfahan, Yezd, Kakhk, and ending at a point on the Persian frontier at the intersection of the Russian and Afghan frontiers, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar Concessions in this region which are supported by the Russian Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Great Britain engages not to seek the Concessions referred to,

II. Russia, on her part engages not to seek for herself and not to support, in favour of Russian subjects, or in favour of the subjects of third Powers, any Concessions of a political or commercial nature — such as Concessions for railways, banks, telegraphs, roads, transport, insurance, &c. — beyond a line going from the Afghan frontier by way of Gazik, Birjand, Kerman, and ending at Bunder Abbas, and not to oppose, directly or indirectly, demands for similar Concessions in this region which are supported by the British Government. It is understood that the above-mentioned places are included in the region in which Russia engages not to seek the Concessions referred to.

III. Russia, on her part, engages not to oppose, without previous arrangement with Great Britain, the grant of any Concessions whatever to British subjects in the regions of Persia situated between the lines mentioned in Articles I. and II.

Great Britain undertakes a similar engagement as regards the grant of Concessions to Russian subjects in the same regions of Persia.

All Concessions existing at present in the regions indicated in Articles I. and II. are maintained.

IV. It is understood that the revenues of all the Persian customs, with the exception of those of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, revenues guaranteeing the amortization and the interest of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement, shall be devoted to the same purpose as in the past.

It is equally understood that the revenues of the Persian customs of Farsistan and of the Persian Gulf, as well as those of the fisheries on the Persian shore of the Caspian Sea and those of the Posts and Telegraphs, shall be devoted, as in the past, to the service of the loans concluded by the Government of the Shah with

the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement.

V. In the event of irregularities occurring in the amortization or the payment of the interest of the Persian loans concluded with the "Banque d'Escompte et des Prêts de Perse" and with the Imperial Bank of Persia up to the date of the signature of the present Agreement, and in the event of the necessity arising for Russia to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the first-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article II. of the present Agreement, or for Great Britain to establish control over the sources of revenue guaranteeing the regular service of the loans concluded with the second-named bank, and situated in the region mentioned in Article I. of the present Agreement, the British and Russian Governments undertake to enter beforehand into a friendly exchange of ideas with a view to determine, in agreement with each other, the measures of control in question and to avoid all interference which would not be in conformity with the principles governing the present Agreement.

Convention concerning Afghanistan.

The High Contracting Parties, in order to ensure perfect security on their respective frontiers in Central Asia and to maintain in these regions a solid and lasting peace, have concluded the following Convention:—

Article I.—His Britannic Majesty's Government declare that they have no intention of changing the political status of Afghanistan.

His Britannic Majesty's Government further engage to exercise their influence in Afghanistan only in a pacific sense, and they will not themselves take, nor encourage Afghanistan to take, any measures threatening Russia.

The Russian Government, on their part, declare that they recognise Afghanistan as outside the sphere of Russian influence, and they engage that all their political relations with Afghanistan shall be conducted through the intermediary of His Britannic Majesty's Government; they further engage not to send any Agents into Afghanistan.

Article II.—The Government of His Britannic Majesty having declared in the Treaty signed at Kabul on the 21st March 1905, that they recognise the Agreement and the engagements concluded with the late Ameer Abdur Rahman, and that they have no intention of interfering in the internal government of Afghan territory, Great Britain engages neither to annex nor to occupy in contravention of that Treaty any portion of Afghanistan or to interfere in the internal administration of the country, provided that the Ameer fulfils the engagements already contracted by him towards His Britannic Majesty's Government under the above-mentioned Treaty.

Article III.—The Russian and Afghan authorities, specially designated for the purpose on the frontier or in the frontier provinces, may establish direct relations with each other for the settlement of local questions of a non-political character.

Article IV.—His Britannic Majesty's Government and the Russian Government affirm their adherence to the principle of equality of commercial opportunity in Afghanistan, and they agree that any facilities which may have been, or shall be hereafter, obtained for British and British-Indian trade and traders, shall be equally enjoyed by Russian trade and traders. Should the progress of trade establish the necessity for Commercial Agents, the two Governments will agree as to what measures shall be taken, due regard, of course, being had to the Ameer's sovereign rights.

Article V.—The present arrangements will only

come into force when His Britannic Majesty's Government shall have notified to the Russian Government the consent of the Ameer to the terms stipulated above.

AGREEMENT CONCERNING THIBET.

The Governments of Great Britain and Russia, recognising the suzerain rights of China in Thibet, and considering the fact that Great Britain, by reason of her geographical position, has a special interest in the maintenance of the *status quo* in the external relations of Thibet, have made the following Agreement:—

Article I.—The two High Contracting Parties engage to respect the territorial integrity of Thibet and to abstain from all interference in its internal administration.

Article II.—In conformity with the admitted principle of the suzerainty of China over Thibet, Great Britain and Russia engage not to enter into negotiations with Thibet except through the intermediary of the Chinese Government. This engagement does not exclude the direct relations between British Commercial Agents and the Thibetan authorities provided for in Article V. of the Convention between Great Britain and Thibet of the 7th September 1904, and confirmed by the Convention between Great Britain and China of the 27th April 1906; nor does it modify the engagements entered into by Great Britain and China in Article I. of the said Convention of 1906.

It is clearly understood that Buddhists, subjects of Great Britain or of Russia, may enter into direct relations on strictly religious matters with the Dalai Lama and the other representatives of Buddhism in Thibet; the Governments of Great Britain and Russia engage, so far as they are concerned, not to allow those relations to infringe the stipulations of the present Agreement.

Article III.—The British and Russian Governments respectively engage not to send Representatives to Lhassa.

Article IV.—The two High Contracting Parties engage neither to seek nor to obtain, whether for themselves or their subjects, any Concessions for railways, roads, telegraphs, and mines, or other rights in Thibet.

Article V.—The two Governments agree that no part of the revenues of Thibet, whether in kind or in cash, shall be pledged or assigned to Great Britain or Russia or to any of their subjects.

Annex to the Agreement between Great Britain and Russia concerning Thibet.

Great Britain reaffirms the Declaration, signed by his Excellency the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, and appended to the ratification of the Convention of the 7th September 1904, to the effect that the occupation of the Chumbi Valley by British forces shall cease after the payment of three annual instalments of the indemnity of 25,00,000 rupees, provided that the trade marts mentioned in Article II. of that Convention have been effectively opened for three years, and that in the meantime the Thibetan authorities have faithfully complied in all respects with the terms of the said Convention of 1904. It is clearly understood that if the occupation of the Chumbi Valley by the British forces has, for any reason, not been terminated at the time anticipated in the above Declaration, the British and Russian Governments will enter upon a friendly exchange of views on this subject.

Done in duplicate at St Petersburgh, the 18th (31st) August 1907.

(L.S.) A. Nicolson.
(L.S.) Iswolsky.

ANNEXES.

(1.)

SIR A. NICOLSON *to* M. ISWOLSKY.

ST PETERSBURGH,
August 18 (31), 1907.

M. LE MINISTER,—With reference to the agreement regarding Thibet, signed to-day, I have the honour to make the following Declaration to your Excellency:—

"His Britannic Majesty's Government think it desirable, so far as they are concerned, not to allow, unless by a previous agreement with the Russian Government, for a period of three years from the date of the present communication, the entry into Thibet of any scientific mission whatever, on condition that a like assurance is given on the part of the Imperial Russian Government.

"His Britannic Majesty's Government propose, moreover, to approach the Chinese Government with a view to induce them to accept a similar obligation for a corresponding period; the Russian Government will, as a matter of course, take similar action.

"At the expiration of the term of three years above mentioned His Britannic Majesty's Government will, if necessary, consult with the Russian Government as to the desirability of any ulterior measures with regard to scientific expeditions to Thibet."

I avail, &c.,—

(Signed) A. NICOLSON.

(2.)

M. ISWOLSKY *to* SIR A. NICOLSON.

ST PETERSBURGH,
August 18 (31), 1907.

M. L'AMBASSADEUR,—In reply to your Excellency's note of to-day's date, I have the honour to declare that the

Imperial Russian Government think it desirable, so far as they are concerned, not to allow, unless by a previous agreement with the British Government, for a period of three years from the date of the present communication, the entry into Thibet of any scientific mission whatever.

Like the British Government, the Imperial Government propose to approach the Chinese Government with a view to induce them to accept a similar obligation for a corresponding period.

It is understood that at the expiration of the term of three years the two Governments will, if necessary, consult with each other as to the desirability of any ulterior measures with regard to scientific expeditions to Thibet.

Accept, &c.,—

(Signed) ISWOLSKY.

APPENDIX II.

INDIAN COUNCILS ACT, 1909.

[9 EDW. 7. CH. 4.]

ARRANGEMENT OF SECTIONS.

Section.
1. Amendment of constitution of Legislative Councils.
2. Constitution and procedure of Executive Councils of Governors of Fort Saint George and Bombay.
3. Power to constitute provincial executive councils.
4. Appointment of Vice-Presidents.
5. Power to extend business of Legislative Councils.
6. Power to make regulations.
7. Laying of proclamations, &c., before Parliament.
8. Short title, construction, commencement, and repeal.
SCHEDULES.

An Act to amend the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 *and* 1892, *and the Government of India Act*, 1833.—[25*th May* 1909.]

BE it enacted by the King's most excellent Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:—

1.—(1) The additional members of the councils for the purpose of making laws and regulations (hereinafter referred to as Legislative Councils) of the Governor-General and of the Governors of Fort Saint George and Bombay, and the members of the Legislative Councils already constituted, or which may hereafter be constituted

of the several Lieutenant-Governors of Provinces, instead of being all nominated by the Governor-General, Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor in manner provided by the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 and 1892, shall include members so nominated and also members elected in accordance with regulations made under this Act, and references in those Acts to the members so nominated and their nomination shall be construed as including references to the members so elected and their election.

(2) The number of additional members or members so nominated and elected, the number of such members required to constitute a quorum, the term of office of such members and the manner of filling up casual vacancies occurring by reason of absence from India, inability to attend to duty, death, acceptance of office, or resignation duly accepted, or otherwise, shall, in the case of each such council, be such as may be prescribed by regulations made under this Act:

Provided that the aggregate number of members so nominated and elected shall not, in the case of any Legislative Council mentioned in the first column of the First Schedule to this Act, exceed the number specified in the second column of that schedule.

2.—(1) The number of ordinary members of the councils of the Governors of Fort Saint George and Bombay shall be such number not exceeding four as the Secretary of State in Council may from time to time direct, of whom two at least shall be persons who at the time of their appointment have been in the service of the Crown in India for at least twelve years.

(2) If at any meeting of either of such councils there is an equality of votes on any question, the Governor or other person presiding shall have two votes or the casting vote.

3.—(1) It shall be lawful for the Governor-General in Council, with the approval of the Secretary of State in Council, by proclamation, to create a council in the Bengal

Division of the Presidency of Fort William for the purpose of assisting the Lieutenant-Governor in the executive government of the province, and by such proclamation—

(*a*) to make provision for determining what shall be the number (not exceeding four) and qualifications of the members of the council; and

(*b*) to make provision for the appointment of temporary or acting members of the council during the absence of any member from illness or otherwise, and for the procedure to be adopted in case of a difference of opinion between a Lieutenant-Governor and his council, and in the case of equality of votes, and in the case of a Lieutenant-Governor being obliged to absent himself from his council from indisposition or any other cause.

(2) It shall be lawful for the Governor-General in Council, with the like approval, by a like proclamation to create a council in any other province under a Lieutenant-Governor for the purpose of assisting the Lieutenant-Governor in the executive government of the province: Provided that before any such proclamation is made a draft thereof shall be laid before each House of Parliament for not less than sixty days during the session of Parliament, and, if before the expiration of that time an address is presented to His Majesty by either House of Parliament against the draft or any part thereof, no further proceedings shall be taken thereon, without prejudice to the making of any new draft.

(3) Where any such proclamation has been made with respect to any province the Lieutenant-Governor may, with the consent of the Governor-General in Council, from time to time make rules and orders for the more convenient transaction of business in his council, and any order made or act done in accordance with the rules and orders so made shall be deemed to be an act or order of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council.

(4) Every member of any such council shall be appointed by the Governor-General, with the approval of His Majesty, and shall, as such, be a member of the Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor, in addition to the members nominated by the Lieutenant-Governor and elected under the provisions of this Act.

4. The Governor-General, and the Governors of Fort Saint George and Bombay, and the Lieutenant-Governor of every province respectively shall appoint a member of their respective councils to be Vice-President thereof, and, for the purpose of temporarily holding and executing the office of Governor-General or Governor of Fort Saint George or Bombay and of presiding at meetings of Council in the absence of the Governor-General, Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor, the Vice-president so appointed shall be deemed to be the senior member of Council and the member highest in rank, and the Indian Councils Act, 1861, and sections sixty-two and sixty-three of the Government of India Act, 1833, shall have effect accordingly.

5.—(1) Notwithstanding anything in the Indian Councils Act, 1861, the Governor-General in Council, the Governors in Council of Fort Saint George and Bombay respectively, and the Lieutenant-Governor or Lieutenant-Governor in Council of every province, shall make rules authorising at any meeting of their respective legislative councils the discussion of the annual financial statement of the Governor-General in Council or of their respective local governments, as the case may be, and of any matter of general public interest, and the asking of questions, under such conditions and restrictions as may be prescribed in the rules applicable to the several councils.

(2) Such rules as aforesaid may provide for the appointment of a member of any such council to preside at any such discussion in the place of the Governor-General, Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor, as the case may be, and of any Vice-President.

(3) Rules under this section, where made by a Governor

in Council, or by a Lieutenant-Governor, or a Lieutenant-Governor in Council, shall be subject to the sanction of the Governor-General in Council, and where made by the Governor-General in Council, shall be subject to the sanction of the Secretary of State in Council, and shall not be subject to alteration or amendment by the Legislative Council of the Governor-General, Governor, or Lieutenant-Governor.

6. The Governor-General in Council shall, subject to the approval of the Secretary of State in Council, make regulations as to the conditions under which and manner in which persons resident in India may be nominated or elected as members of the Legislative Councils of the Governor-General, Governors, and Lieutenant-Governors, and as to the qualifications for being, and for being nominated or elected, a member of any such council, and as to any other matter for which regulations are authorised to be made under this Act, and also as to the manner in which those regulations are to be carried into effect. Regulations under this section shall not be subject to alteration or amendment by the Legislative Council of the Governor-General.

7. All proclamations, regulations, and rules made under this Act, other than rules made by a Lieutenant-Governor for the more convenient transaction of business in his council, shall be laid before both Houses of Parliament as soon as may be after they are made.

8.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Indian Councils Act, 1909, and shall be construed with the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 and 1892, and those Acts, the Indian Councils Act, 1869, the Indian Councils Act, 1871, the Indian Councils Act, 1874, the Indian Councils Act, 1904, and this Act may be cited together as the Indian Councils Acts, 1861 to 1909.

(2) This Act shall come into operation on such date or dates as the Governor-General in Council, with the approval of the Secretary of State in Council, may

appoint, and different dates may be appointed for different purposes and provisions of this Act and for different councils.

On the date appointed for the coming into operation of this Act as respects any Legislative Council, all the nominated members of the council then in office shall go out of office, but may, if otherwise qualified, be renominated or be elected in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

(3) The enactments mentioned in the Second Schedule to this Act are hereby repealed to the extent mentioned in the third column of that schedule.

SCHEDULES.

FIRST SCHEDULE.

MAXIMUM NUMBERS OF NOMINATED AND ELECTED MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

Legislative Council.	Maximum Number.
Legislative Council of the Governor-General . . .	60
Legislative Council of the Governor of Fort Saint George .	50
Legislative Council of the Governor of Bombay . . .	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Bengal division of the Presidency of Fort William . . .	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam	50
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of the Punjab	30
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of the Province of Burma	30
Legislative Council of the Lieutenant-Governor of any Province which may hereafter be constituted . .	30

SECOND SCHEDULE.

ENACTMENTS REPEALED.

Session and Chapter.	Short Title.	Extent of Repeal.
24 & 25 Vict. c. 67.	The Indian Councils Act, 1861.	In section ten, the words "not "less than six nor more than "twelve in number." In section eleven, the words "for "the term of two years from "the date of such nomina- "tion." In section fifteen, the words from "and the power of making "laws and regulations" to "shall be present." In section twenty-nine, the words "not less than four nor more "than eight in number." In section thirty, the words "for "the term of two years from the "date of such nomination." In section thirty-four, the words from "and the power of mak- "ing laws and regulations" to "shall be present." In section forty-five, the words from "and the power of mak- "ing laws and regulations" to "shall be present."
55 & 56 Vict. c. 14.	The Indian Councils Act, 1892.	Sections one and two. In section four, the words "ap- "pointed under the said Act or "this Act" and paragraph (2).

APPENDIX III.

On July 26 (1910) it was officially announced in the House of Commons that Mr W. H. Clark, a junior member of the English Civil Service, had been appointed to the Viceroy's Council as member in charge of the Department of Commerce and Industry; and on August the 1st the following letter appeared in the columns of 'The Times':—

APPOINTMENTS TO HIGH OFFICE IN INDIA.

(To the Editor of 'The Times.')

SIR,—Lord Morley is fond of quoting John Stuart Mill, and it is probable, therefore, that Mill's views on the considerations which should govern the selection of officials for high office under the Crown in India will be of interest to him. I do not dwell upon the emphasis with which Mill insisted that such appointments should be "kept out of the vortex of party and Parliamentary jobbing," because it is inconceivable that a man of Lord Morley's character and calibre should be influenced by any such considerations; but I venture to call his attention to Mill's view on another aspect of the question:—

"If any door to the higher appointments, without passing through the lower, be opened even for occasional use, there will be such incessant knocking at it by persons of influence, that it will be impossible ever to keep it closed. The only excepted appoint-

ment should be the highest one of all" — *i.e.*, the Viceroy.

It is probable that the Indian Civil Service as a whole holds the same view as Mill, and when it is remembered that there are now members of that Service who passed their Civil Service examination the same year as Mr W. H. Clark, but with greater success than he did, holding comparatively subordinate positions in the Department of Commerce and Industry, the enthusiasm with which the Service will welcome the inclusion of Mr Lloyd George's private secretary in the Indian Cabinet as Minister in charge of that Department can be better imagined than described.

It is notorious that the attractiveness of the Indian Civil Service has undergone a disconcerting set-back during recent years. Is it conceivable that the appointment of a junior official from the English Civil Service to one of the highest offices which India has to offer to her servants, to the exclusion of men who have borne the heat and burden of the day, and who have qualified themselves for high executive office by years of devoted service in India, is calculated to stay the set-back?

And are we to understand that there cannot be found within the ranks of the Indian Service any one qualified to hold the office? If this indeed be so, let us cry Ichabod and say no more. But the suggestion is as unjustifiable as it is grotesque.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

RONALDSHAY.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, *July* 28.

It is well known that when the Department was created during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty in 1904, it was the intention of the Indian Government to secure, if possible, the services of a prominent member of the business community. It was not found possible to do

so, and a member of the Indian Civil Service of great knowledge and experience was appointed. The selection of Sir John P. Hewett, K.C.I.E., as the first holder of the new office, met with universal approbation; and, when promoted to the Lieutenant-Governorship of the United Provinces he was succeeded by another Indian Civilian admirably qualified to discharge the duties of the office. When it became known that Lord Morley intended ignoring both the commercial community and the Indian Civil Service, public opinion in India expressed itself with uncompromising directness. I append the following extracts from a leading article which appeared in the 'Times of India' of July 14, 1910:—

"When we turn to the proposed appointment of Mr Clark to the Membership of Commerce and Industry, it is to be confronted by the most extraordinary situation ever treated in this topsy-turvy land. Public opinion in India has never wavered in its demands upon the holders of this office. It has always asked for a commercial man, failing that for an official with commercial experience, and if no member of either of these classes is available, for a member of the Indian Civil Service. . . . There are at present in the country two commercial men, probably both of them available, who would command the approval of the commercial community. There is in the service of Government at least one official with large commercial experience. There are several Indian Civilians, who have come closely into contact with the commercial community, and who would go to the office with the general good will of commercial men. . . . Mr Clark is a member of the English Civil Service. That is to say, he has passed through almost precisely the same academic training as the members of the Indian Civil Service. He has had absolutely no commercial experience. . . . Yet he is to be brought out here to supersede men tried in the public service when he was a callow

student, and to sit over men who have forgotten more than he ever learnt. . . .

"Quite apart from the personality of Mr Clark, we say most emphatically that for Lord Morley to search the junior ranks of the English Civil Service in order to find a member for commerce for India, is an insult to the Indian Civil Service and to the Government of India which no shallow sophistries can disguise. We know nothing of Mr Clark except what is to his credit: but we do not like the auspices under which he comes forward, and unless he is a Titanic genius, which even his friends would not claim for him, his appointment would be a scandal. We hold no brief for the Civil Service, for we would welcome a commercial man of repute, whether his experience was in England or in India. But we do say most emphatically that in regard both to the Finance and Commercial Memberships, no Secretary of State has any right to supersede the Indian Civilian unless by a gentleman whose attainments are markedly superior to those of his Anglo-Indian colleagues. Lord Morley has already made one outside appointment almost grotesque in its effects upon the Council. He has another in contemplation which is even more outrageous. He may cynically say that he has the power, and he means to exercise it at his own sweet will and pleasure. Very well; but in this world you cannot have it both ways. Lord Morley cannot flout the Civil Service and the Government of India, and at the same time declare that he is their good and sincere friend. He must come out in the open, and admit that reckless of consequences he has pursued the course which must inevitably tend to lower the status of both."

APPENDIX IV.

JAPAN AND KOREA.

TERMS OF THE ANNEXATION.

The following is the official text of the Japanese proclamation annexing Korea, together with the Treaty concluded between the two countries:—

Notwithstanding the earnest and laborious work of reform in the administration of Korea, in which the Governments of Japan and Korea have been engaged for more than four years since the conclusion of the Agreement of 1905, the existing system of government in that country has not proved entirely equal to the duty of preserving public order and tranquillity; and in addition, the spirit of suspicion and misgiving dominates the whole peninsula.

In order to maintain peace and stability in Korea, to promote the prosperity and welfare of Koreans, and at the same time to ensure the safety and repose of foreign residents, it has been made abundantly clear that fundamental changes in the actual *régime* of government are absolutely essential. The Governments of Japan and Korea, being convinced of the urgent necessity of introducing reforms responsive to the requirements of the situation and of furnishing sufficient guarantee for the future, have, with the approval of his Majesty the Emperor of Japan and his Majesty the Emperor of Korea, concluded, through their respective plenipotentiaries, a

treaty providing for complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan. By virtue of that important act, which shall take effect on its promulgation on August 29, 1910, the Imperial Government of Japan undertake the entire government and administration of Korea, and they hereby declare that the matters relating to foreigners and foreign trade in Korea shall be conducted in accordance with the following rules :—

1. Treaties hitherto concluded by Korea with foreign Powers ceasing to be operative, Japan's existing treaties will, so far as practicable, be applied to Korea. Foreigners resident in Korea will, so far as conditions permit, enjoy the same rights and immunities as in Japan proper, and the protection of their legally acquired rights subject in all cases to the jurisdiction of Japan. The Imperial Government of Japan are ready to consent that the jurisdiction in respect of the cases actually pending in any foreign Consular Court in Korea at the time the Treaty of Annexation takes effect shall remain in such Court until final decision.

2. Independently of any conventional engagements formerly existing on the subject, the Imperial Government of Japan will for a period of ten years levy upon goods imported into Korea from foreign countries or exported from Korea to foreign countries and upon foreign vessels entering any of the open ports of Korea the same import or export duties and the same tonnage dues as under the existing schedules. The same import or export duties and tonnage dues as those to be levied upon the aforesaid goods and vessels will also for a period of ten years be applied in respect of goods imported into Korea from Japan or exported from Korea to Japan and Japanese vessels entering any of the open ports of Korea.

3. The Imperial Government of Japan will also permit for a period of ten years vessels under flags of the Powers having treaties with Japan to engage in the coasting

trade between the open ports of Korea and between those ports and any open port of Japan.

4. The existing open ports of Korea, with the exemption of Masampo, will be continued as open ports, and in addition Shiwiju will be newly opened so that vessels, foreign as well as Japanese, will there be admitted and goods may be imported into and exported from these ports.

THE TREATY.

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan and his Majesty the Emperor of Korea, having in view the special and close relations between their respective countries, desiring to promote the common weal of the two nations and to assure permanent peace in the Extreme East, and being convinced that these objects can be best attained by the annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan, have resolved to conclude a treaty of such annexation, and have for that purpose appointed as their plenipotentiaries, that is to say, his Majesty the Emperor of Japan, Viscount Masakata Terauchi, his Resident-General, and his Majesty the Emperor of Korea Ye Wan Yeng, his Minister President of State, who upon mutual conference and deliberation have agreed to the following articles:—

Article I.—His Majesty the Emperor of Korea makes complete and permanent cession to his Majesty the Emperor of Japan of all rights of sovereignty over the whole of Korea.

Article II.—His Majesty the Emperor of Japan accepts the cession mentioned in the preceding article and consents to the complete annexation of Korea to the Empire of Japan.

Article III.—His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will accord to their Majesties the Emperor and ex-Emperor and his Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Korea and their consorts and heirs such titles, dignities, and honours as are appropriate to their respective ranks, and

sufficient annual grants will be made for the maintenance of such titles, dignities, and honours.

Article IV.—His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will also accord appropriate honour and treatment to the members of the Imperial House of Korea and their heirs other than those mentioned in the preceding article, and funds necessary for the maintenance of such honour and treatment will be granted.

Article V.—His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will confer peerages and monetary grants upon those Koreans who, on account of meritorious services, are regarded as deserving such special recognition.

Article VI.—In consequence of the aforesaid annexation the Government of Japan assume the entire government and administration of Korea, and undertake to afford full protection for the person and property of the Koreans obeying to the laws there in force and to promote the welfare of all such Koreans.

Article VII.—The Government of Japan will, so far as circumstances permit, employ in the public services of Japan in Korea those Koreans who accept the new *régime* loyally and in good faith and who are duly qualified for such services.

Article VIII.—This treaty, having been approved by his Majesty the Emperor of Japan and his Majesty the Emperor of Korea, shall take effect from the date of its promulgation.

In faith thereof, &c.

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